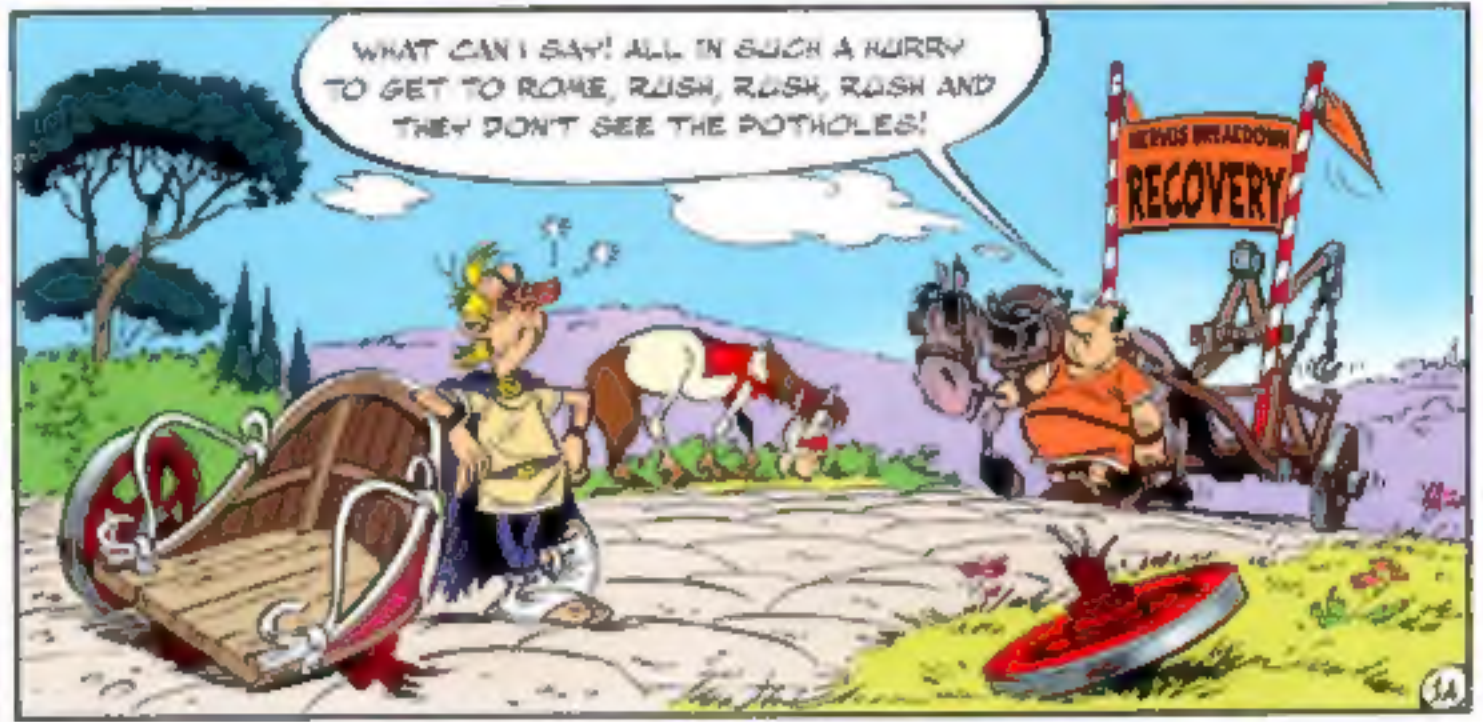


ITALY ...

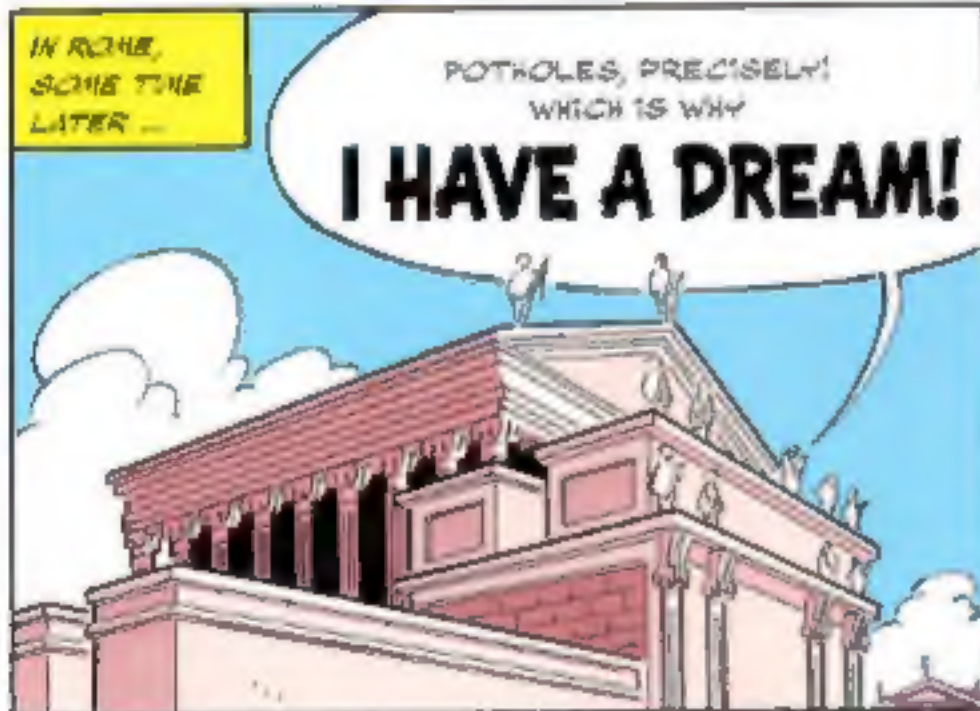
WHAT BETTER SYMBOL OF ITS
FAZZLING CIVILISATION THAN ITS
WONDERFUL ROADS. THEY ARRIVE,
STRAIGHT AND RELIABLE, FROM EVERY
CORNER OF THE KNOWN WORLD, AND
THEY ALL LEAD TO ROME ...



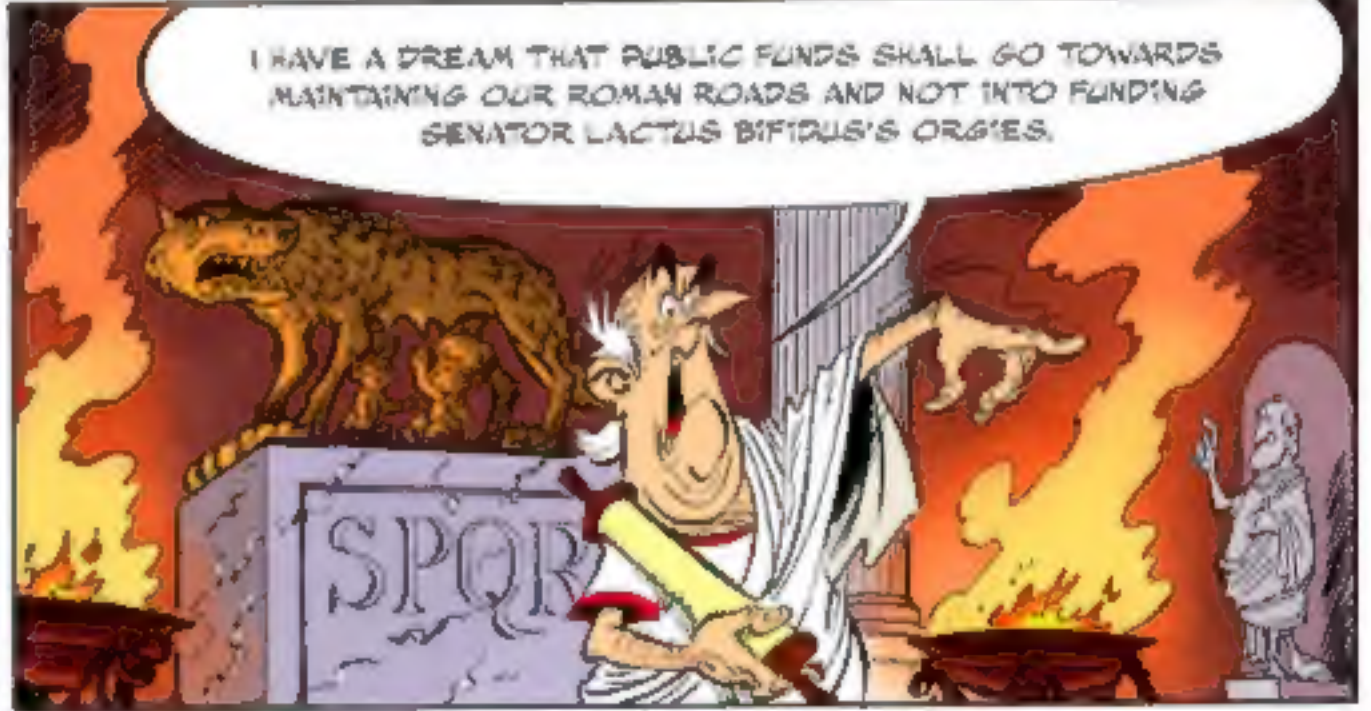
IN ROME,
SOME TIME
LATER ...

POTHOLES, PRECISELY!
WHICH IS WHY

I HAVE A DREAM!



I HAVE A DREAM THAT PUBLIC FUNDS SHALL GO TOWARDS
MAINTAINING OUR ROMAN ROADS AND NOT INTO FUNDING
SENATOR LACTUS BIFIDUS'S ORGIES.



THERE'S MOUNTING ANGER IN THE
REGIONS ABOUT THE DEPLORABLE STATE
OF OUR ROMAN ROADS!



**L-LIES! I, LACTUS BIFIDUS, HAVE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR ROMAN ROADS, AND I CANNOT
ACCEPT THESE ALLEGATIONS!**



**SO I'D LIKE TO TAKE
THIS OPPORTUNITY TO
ANNOUNCE A SPECIAL
ONE-OFF CHARIOT RACE!**



**THIS RACE WILL CROSS THE
ENTIRE ITALIC PENINSULA
AND WILL BE OPEN TO ALL
THE PEOPLES OF THE
KNOWN WORLD!**

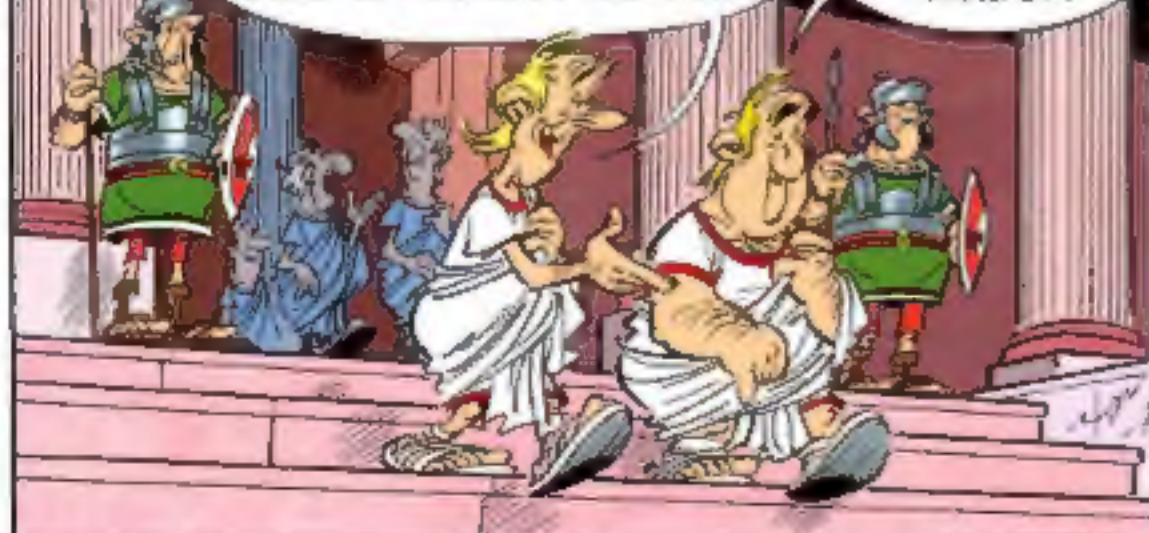


**IT WILL BE A SPLENDID
SHOWCASE FOR THE
EXCELLENT STATE OF OUR
ROMAN ROADS!**



THIS RACE IS A STROKE OF GENIUS!
THERMOCUMULUS ALMOST HAD STEAM
COMING OUT OF HIS EARS! DID IT
COME TO YOU JUST LIKE THAT?

JUST LIKE THAT...
I'M FULL OF IDEAS
WHEN I FIRST
WAKE UP!

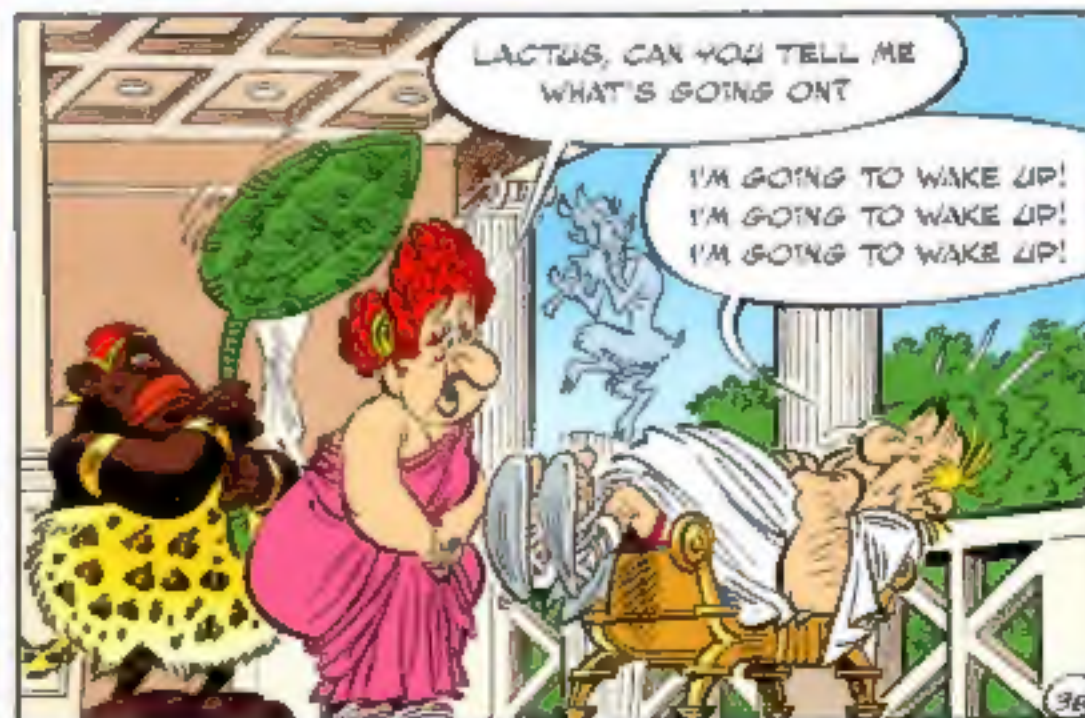
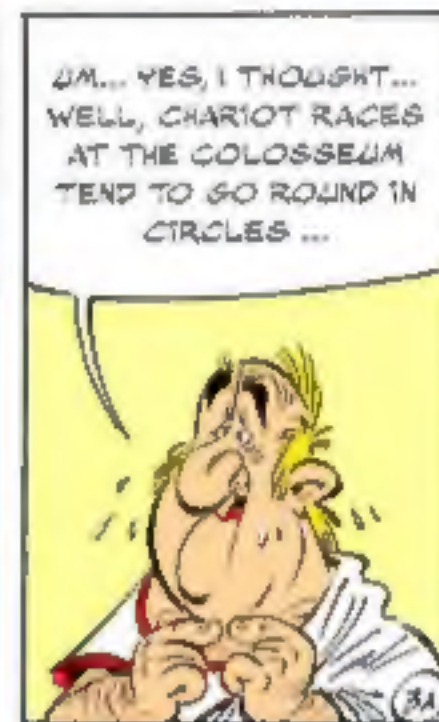
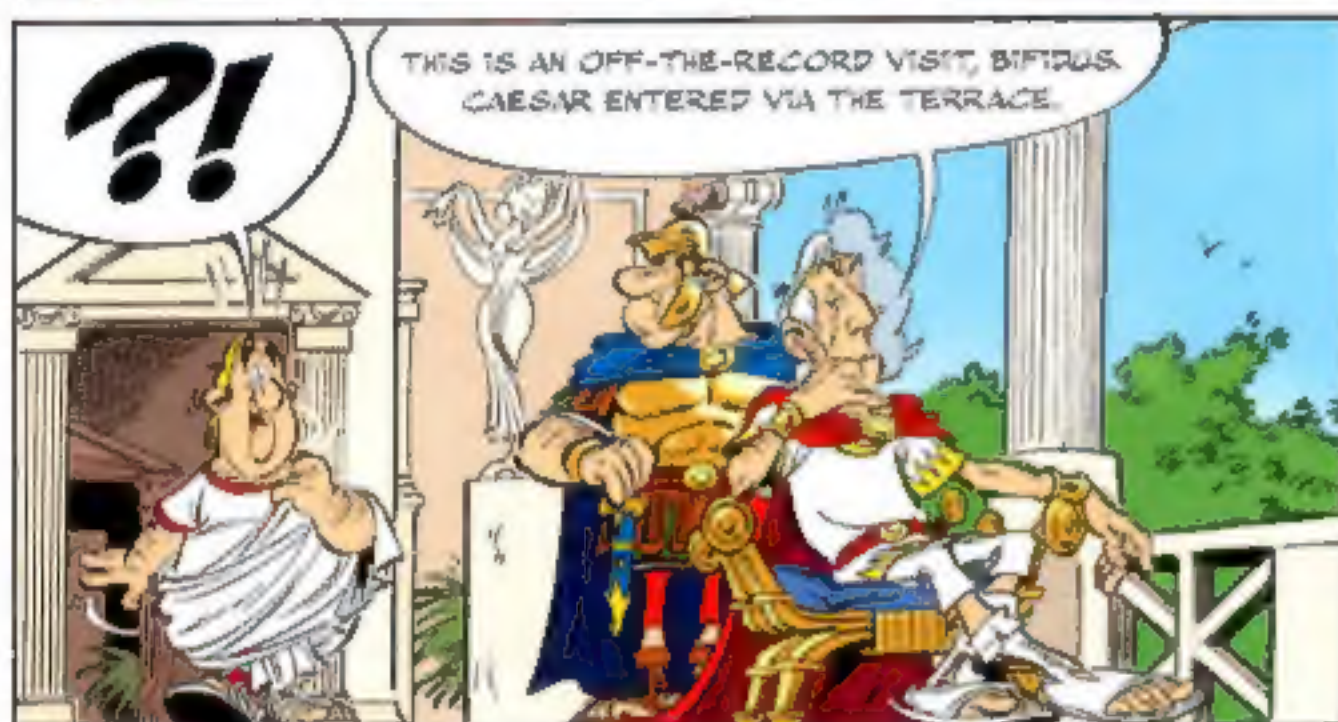
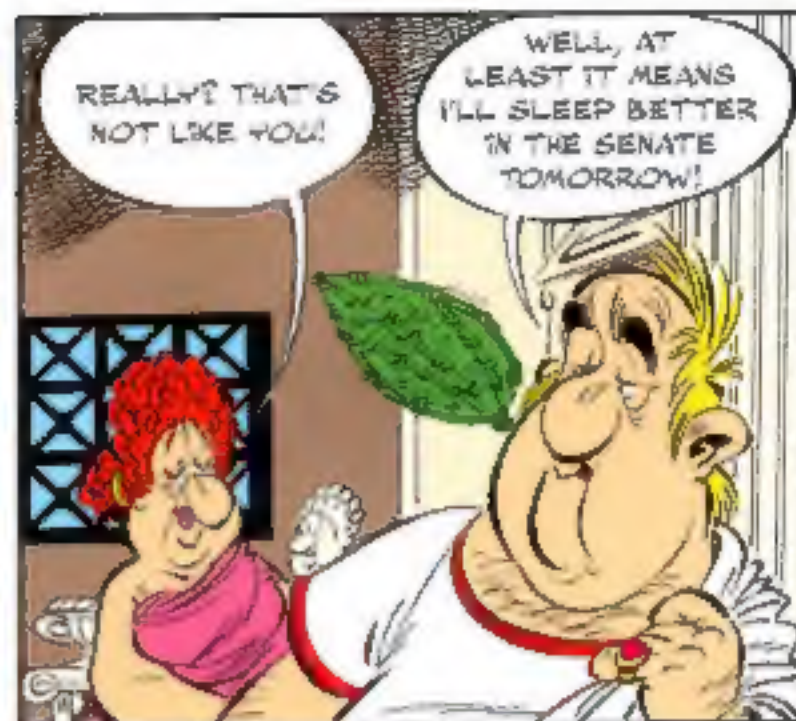


THE ONLY PROBLEM IS WE
NOW HAVE A RACE TO
ORGANISE AND THE ROAD
NETWORK'S A NIGHTMARE ...



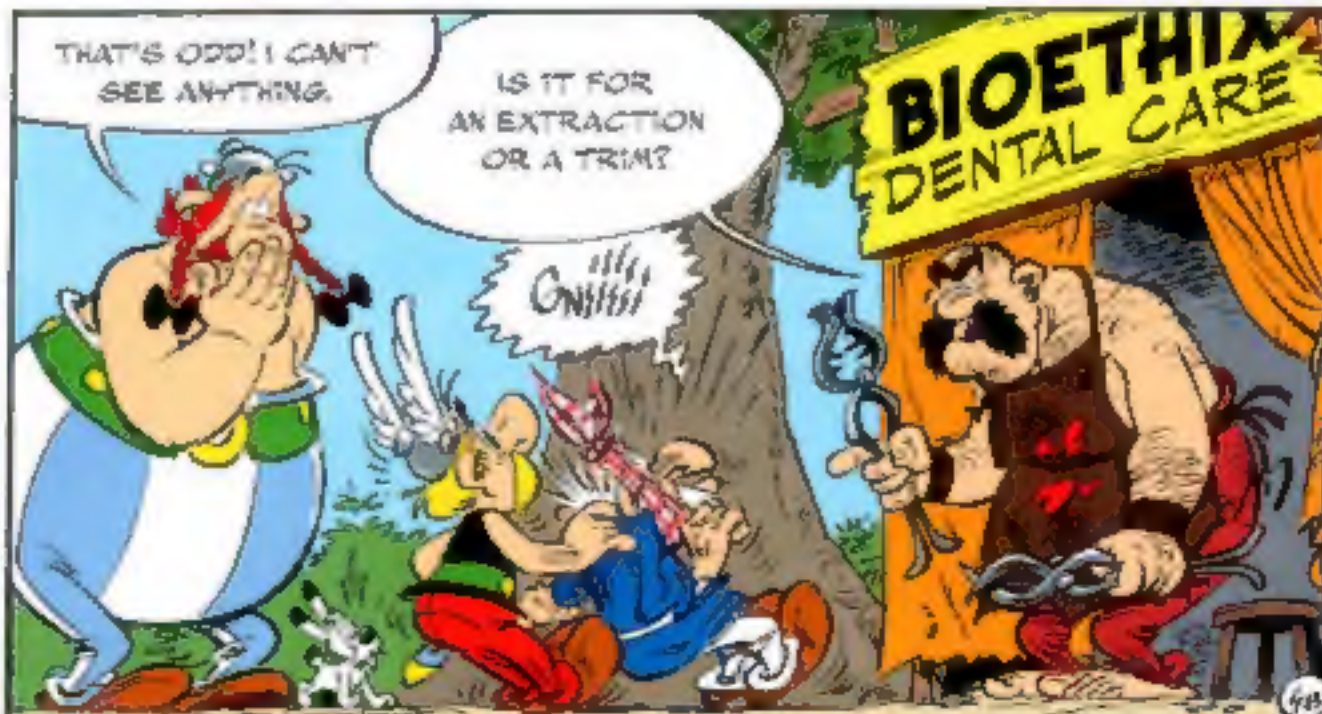
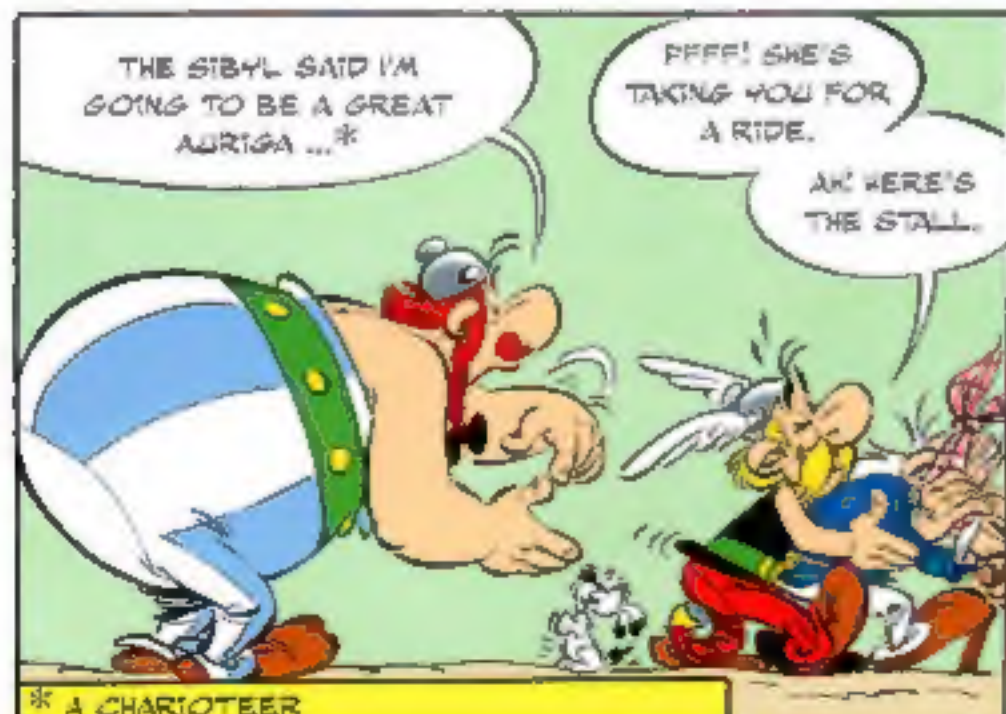
I KNOW, I'M IN
CHARGE OF IT.



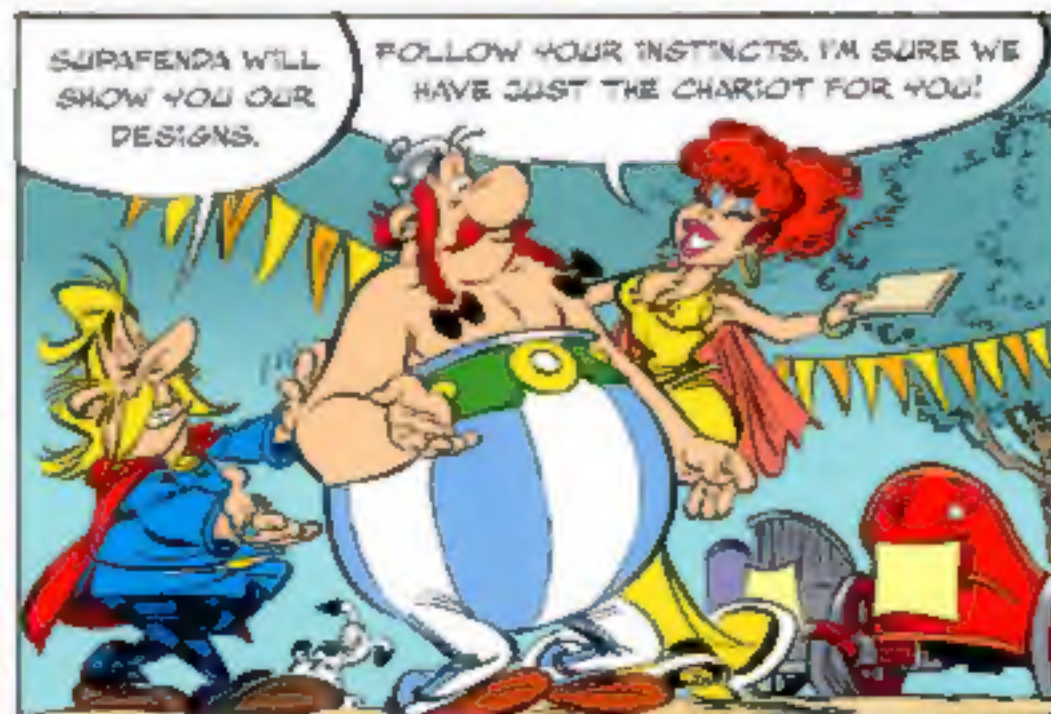
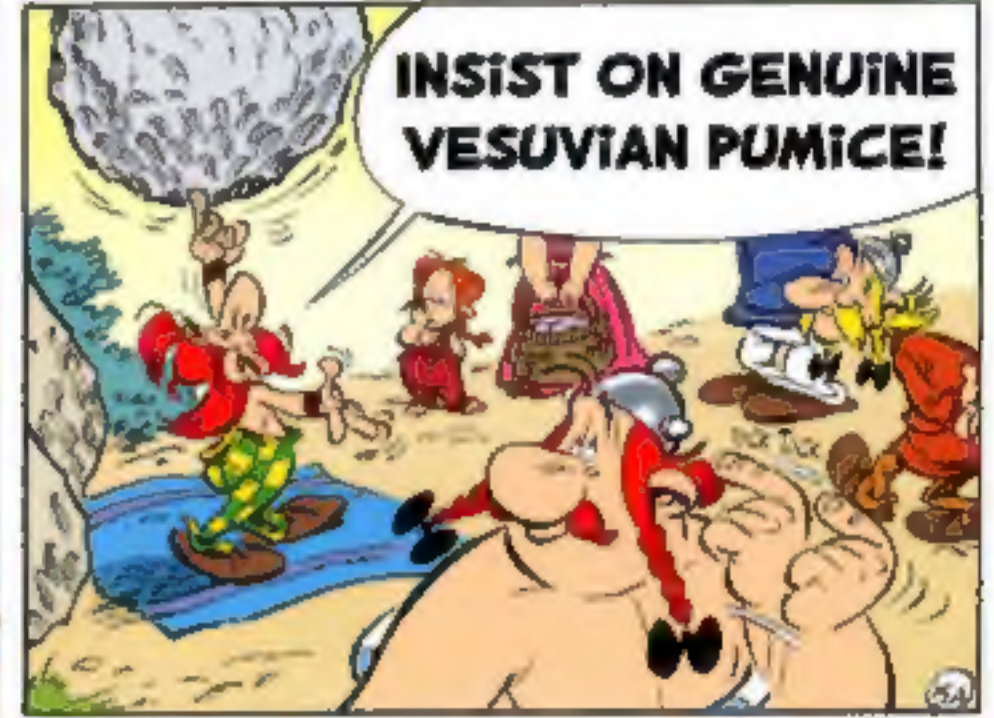
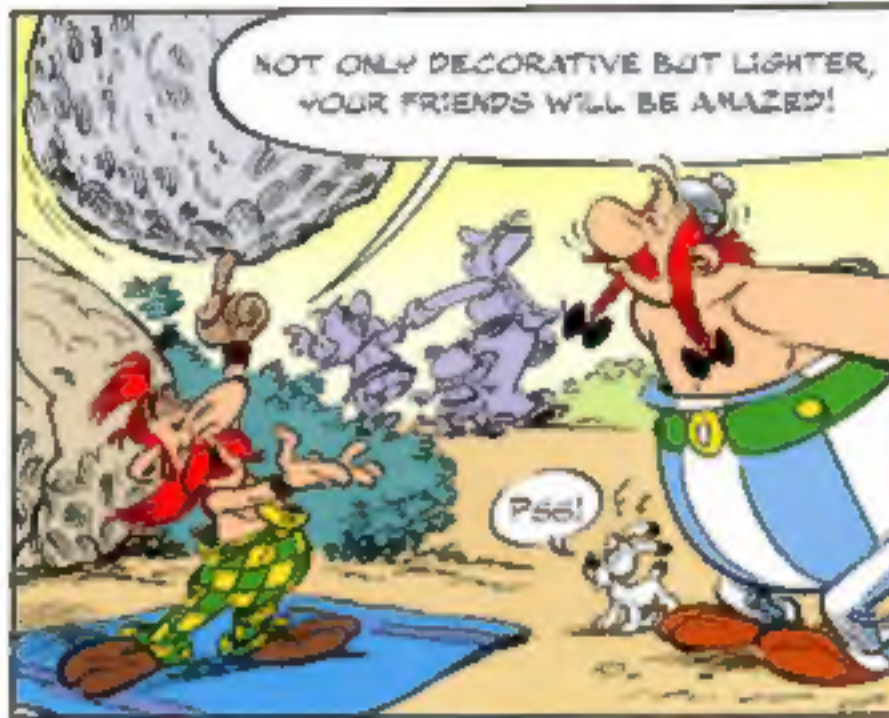
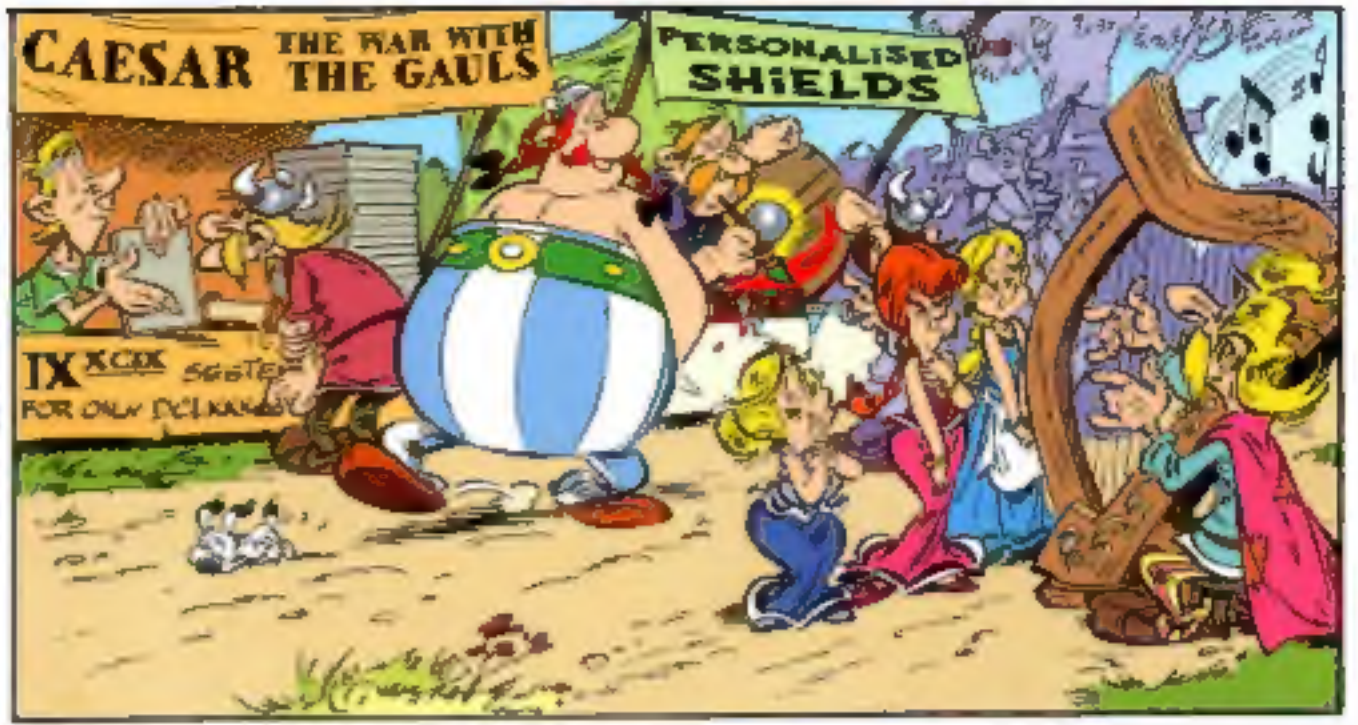
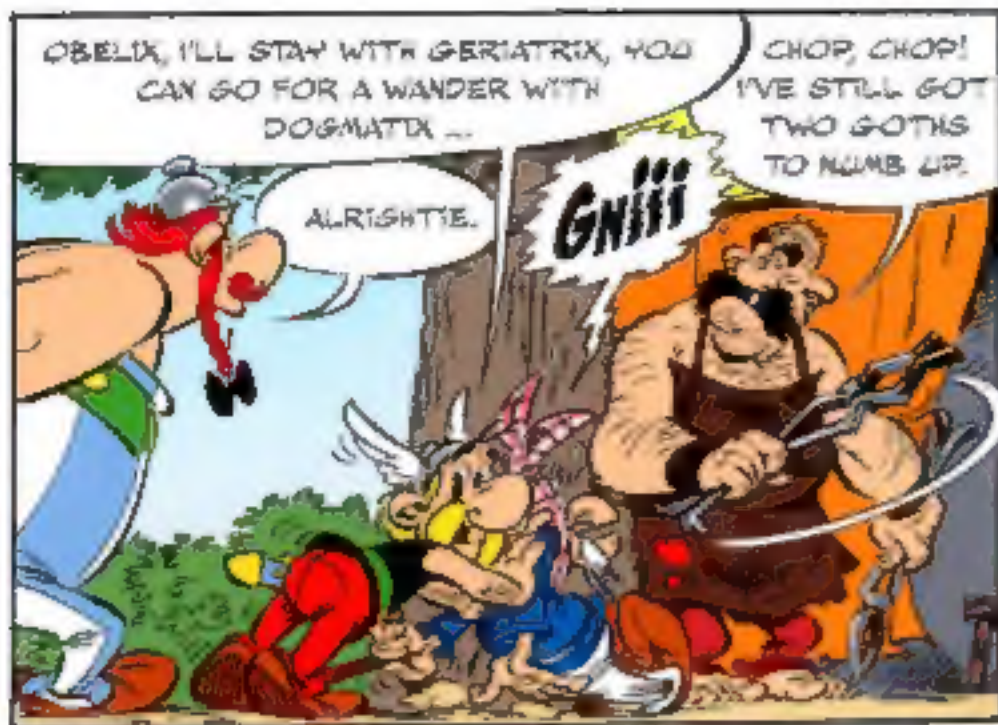


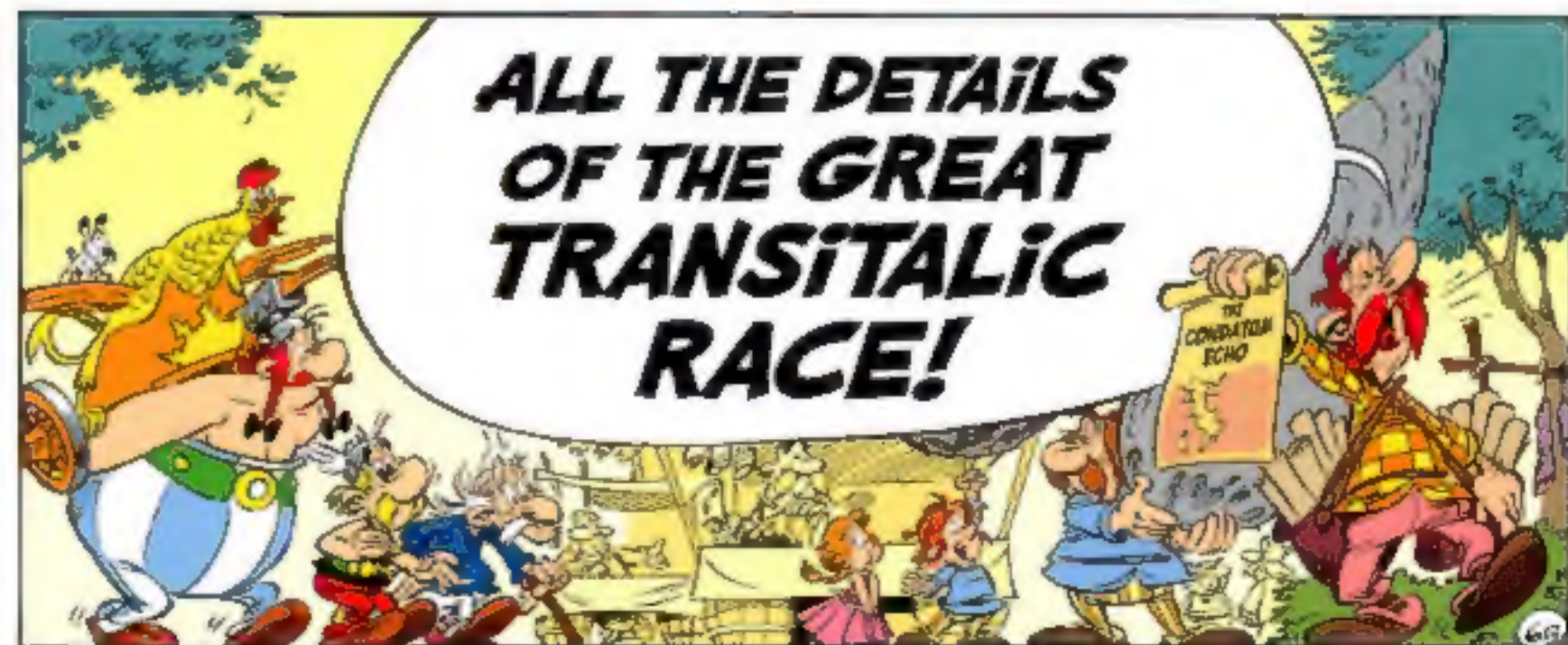
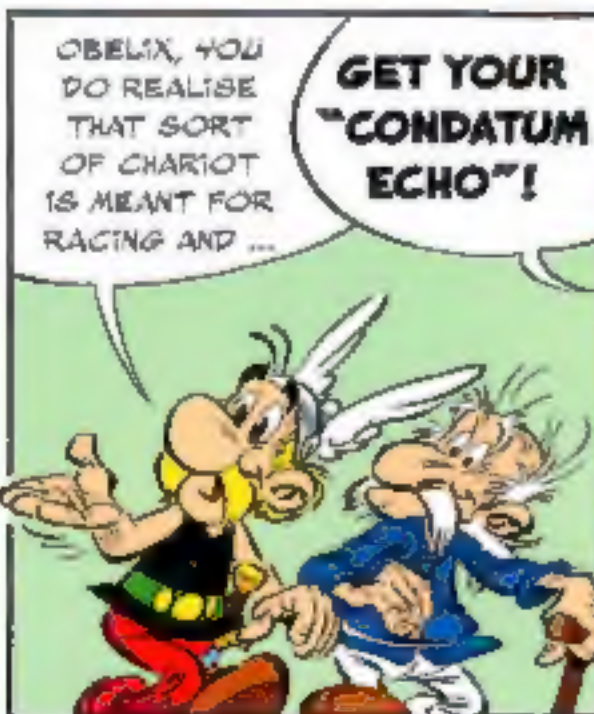
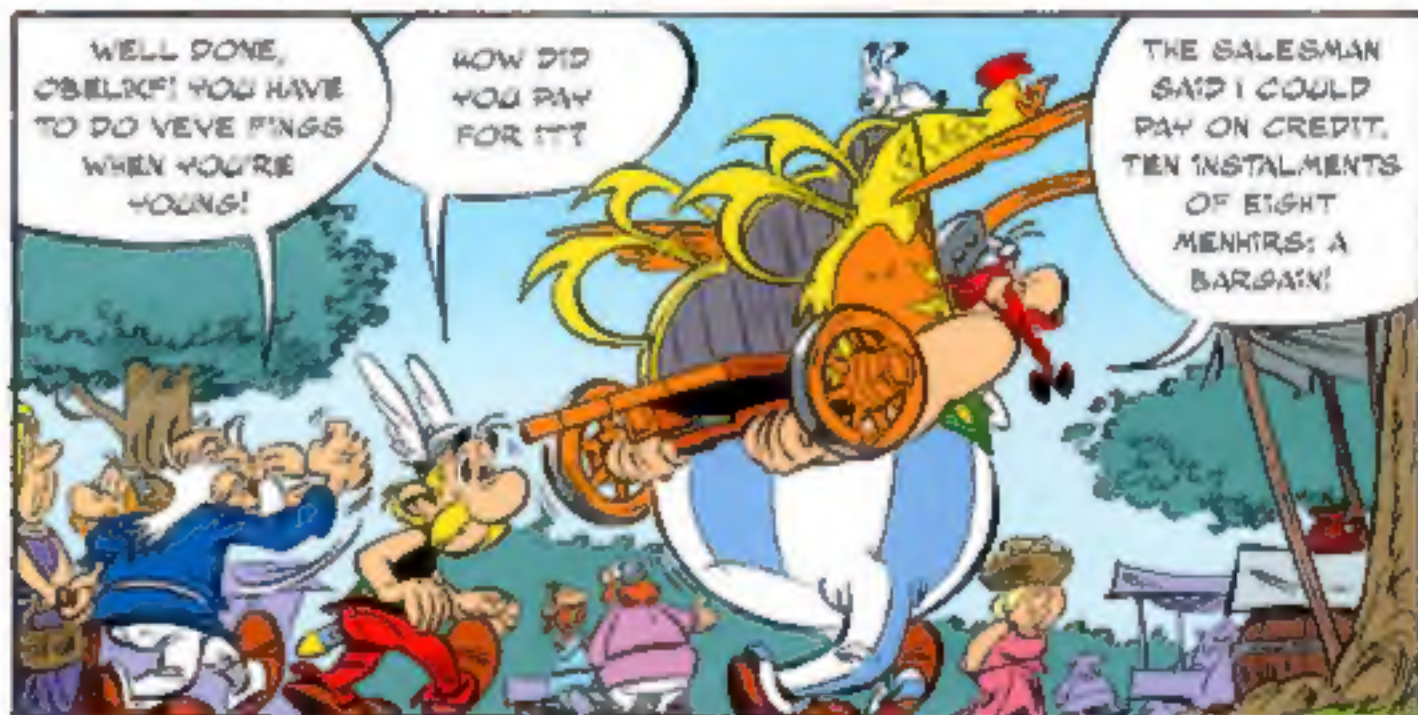
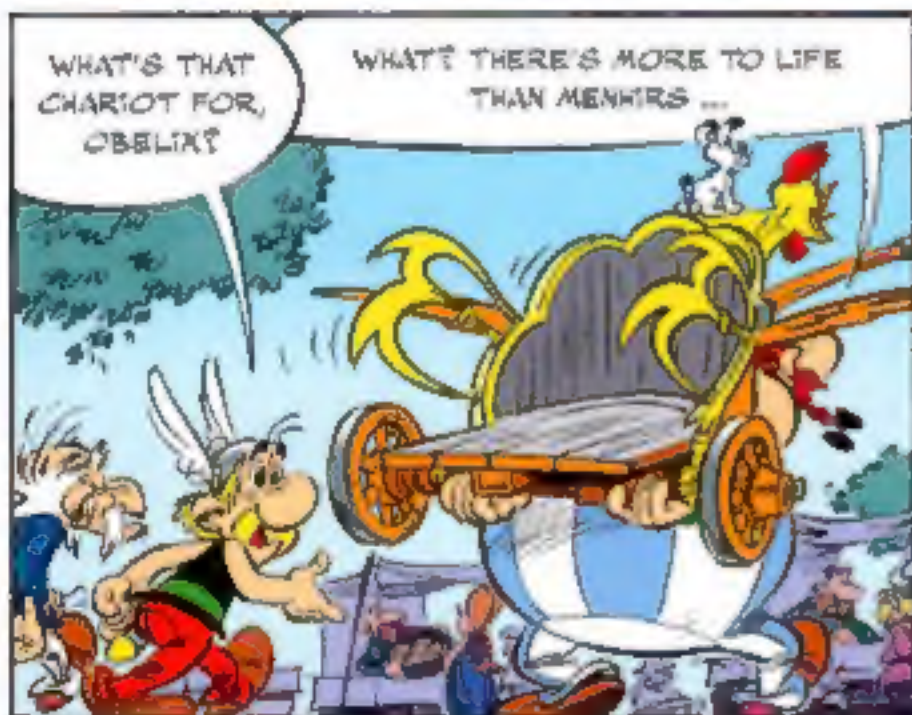
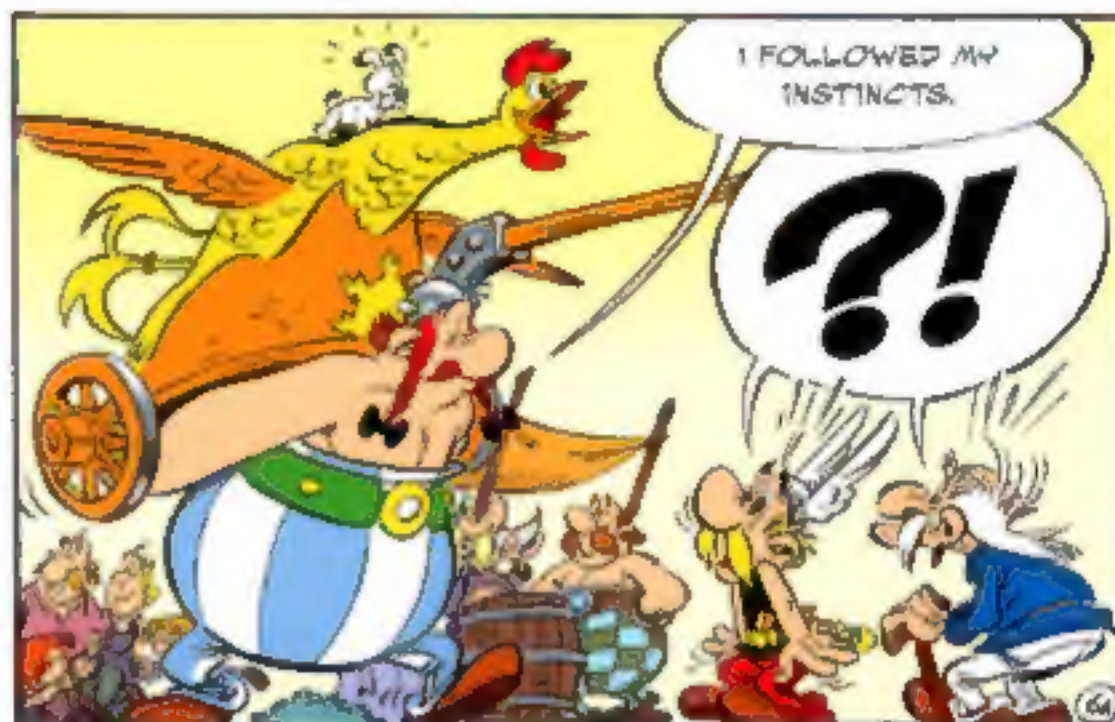
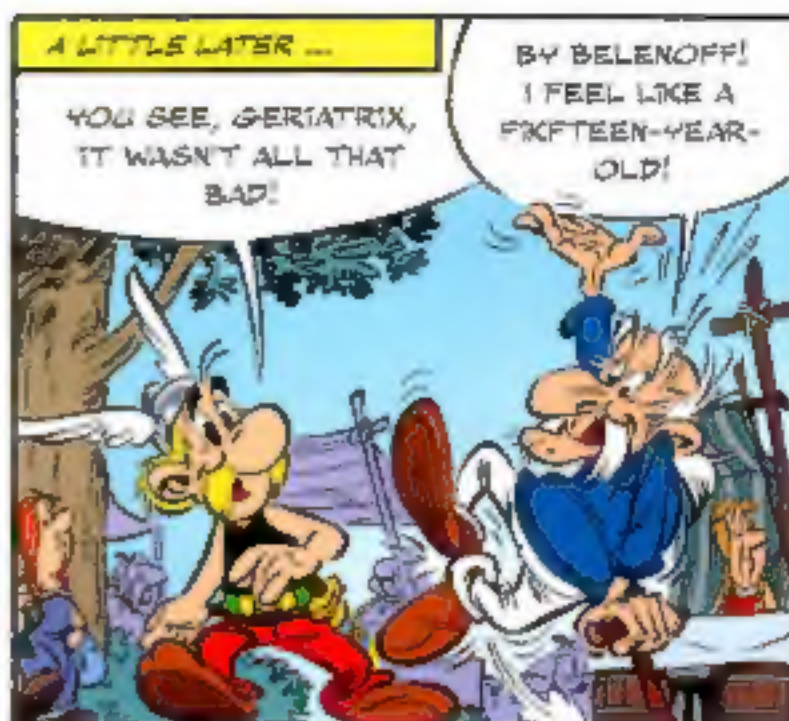
* LIBYA

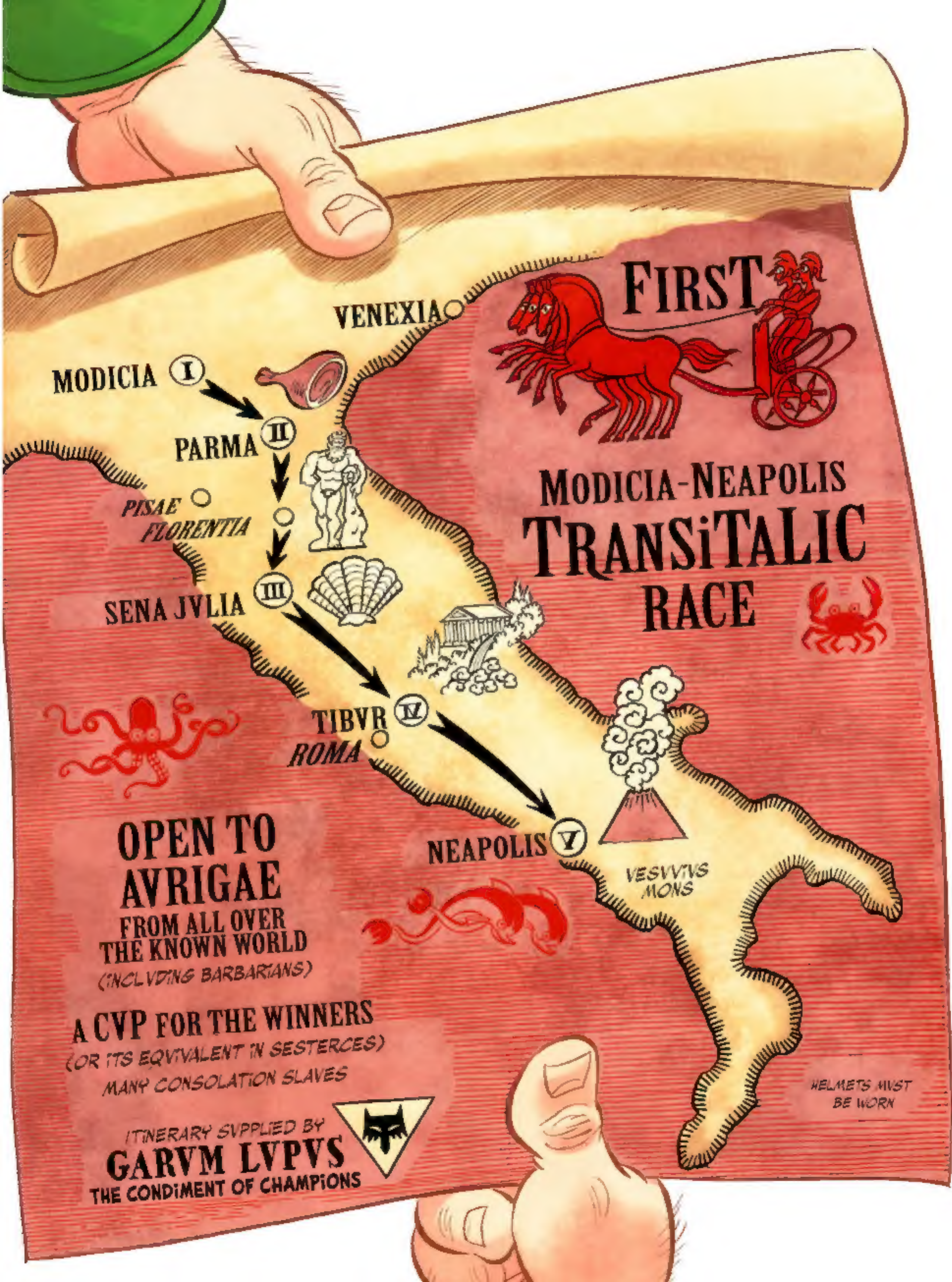
SOME TIME LATER WE FIND OURSELVES IN DARTORTUM* IN ARMORICA WHICH IS HOSTING THE ITTNERANT MARKETPLACE FOR ARTEFACTS OF EXCELLENCE (IMAX) ... AND IN THE CROWD WE RECOGNISE A FEW OF OUR FAMILIAR GAULS ...



* A CHARIOTEER







FIRST



**MODICIA-NEAPOLIS
TRANSITALIC
RACE**



MODICIA

I

PARMA

II

PISAE
FLORENTIA

SENA JVLIA

III

TIBVR

ROMA

IV

NEAPOLIS

V

VESVVVS
MONS

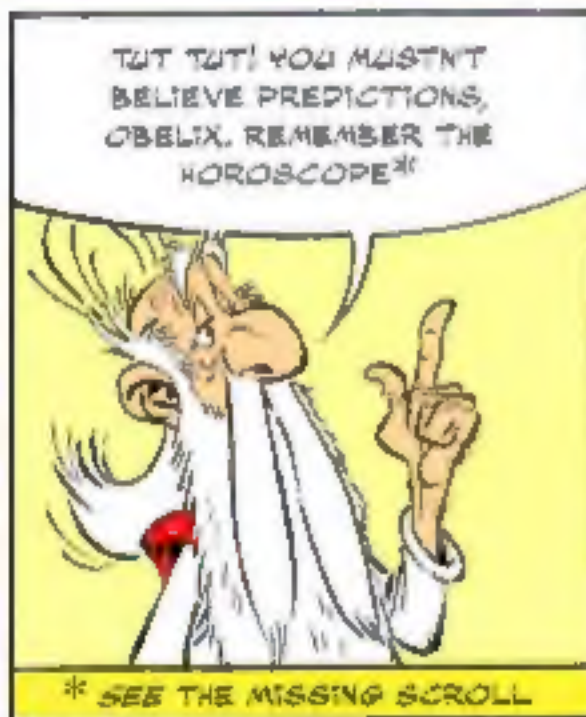
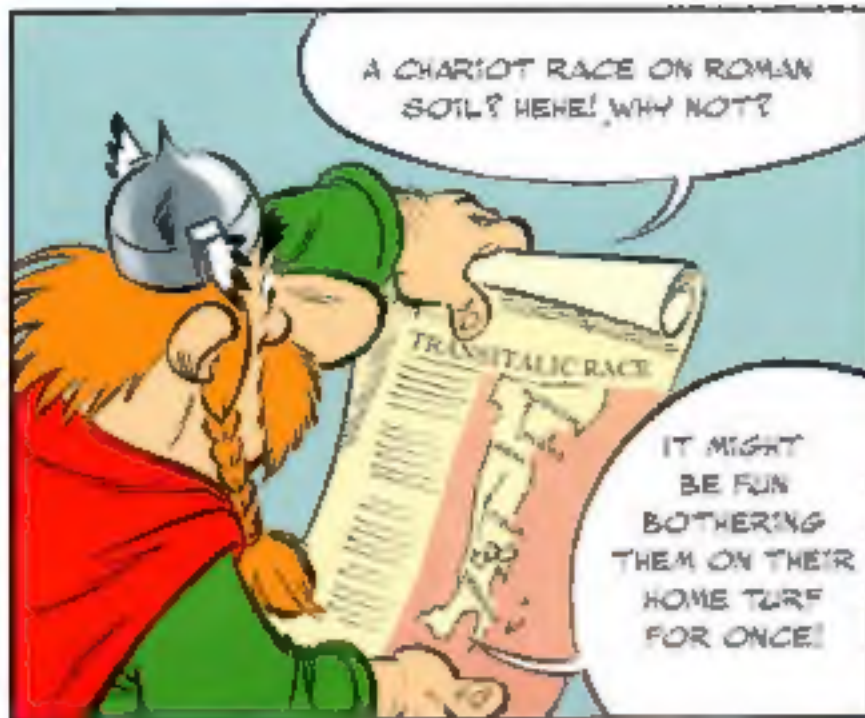
**OPEN TO
AVRIGAE**
FROM ALL OVER
THE KNOWN WORLD
(INCLUDING BARBARIANS)

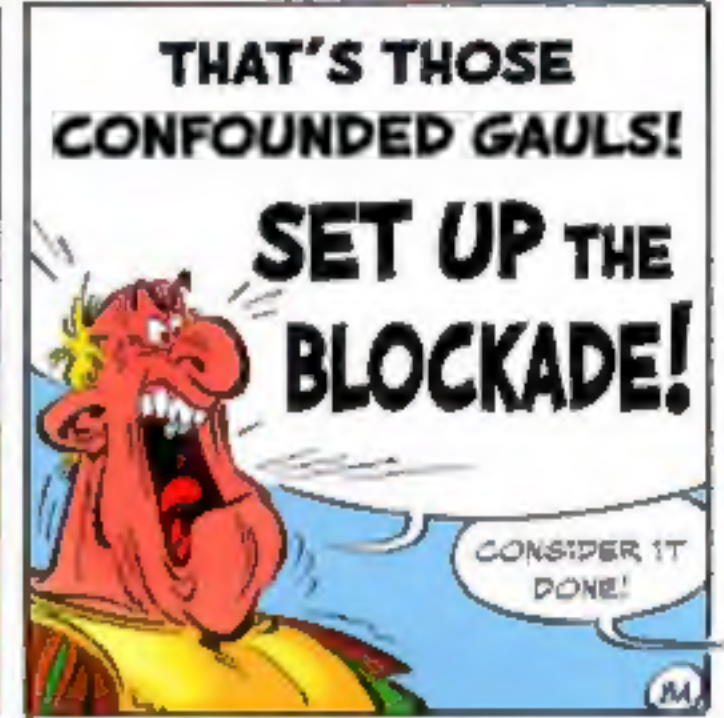
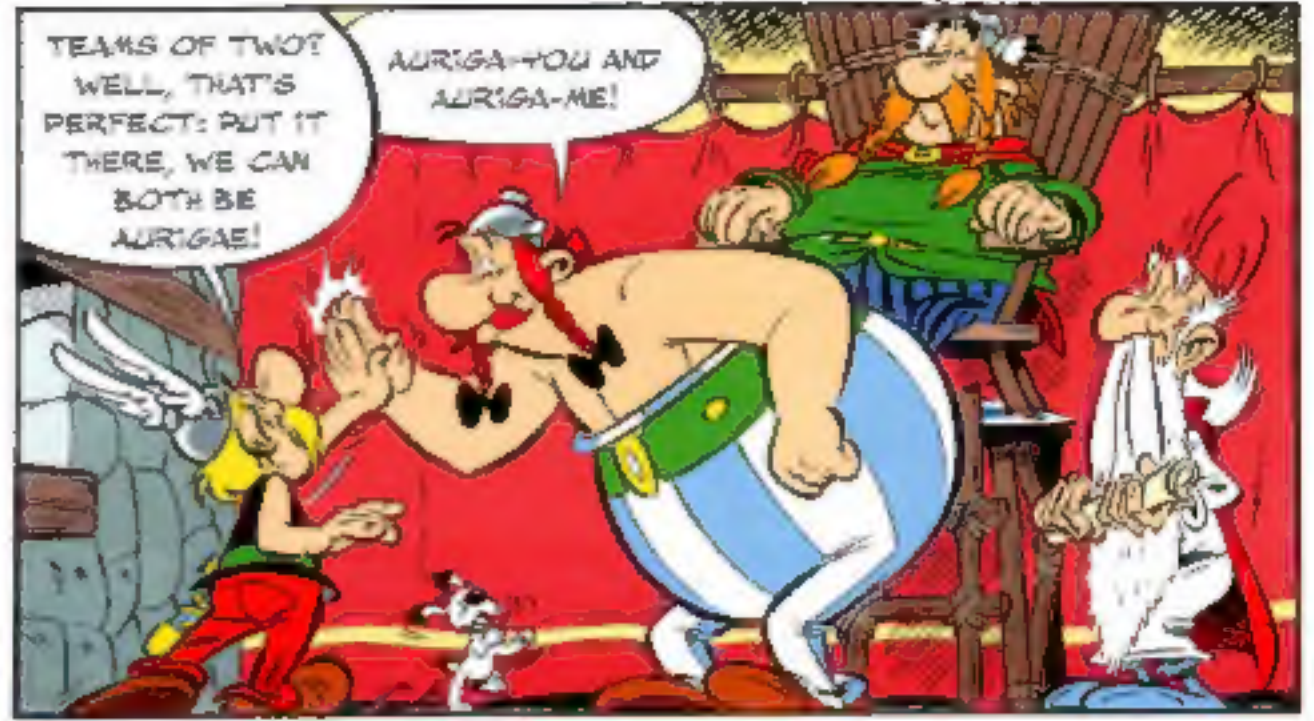
A CVP FOR THE WINNERS
(OR ITS EQUIVALENT IN SESTERCES)
MANY CONSOLATION SLAVES

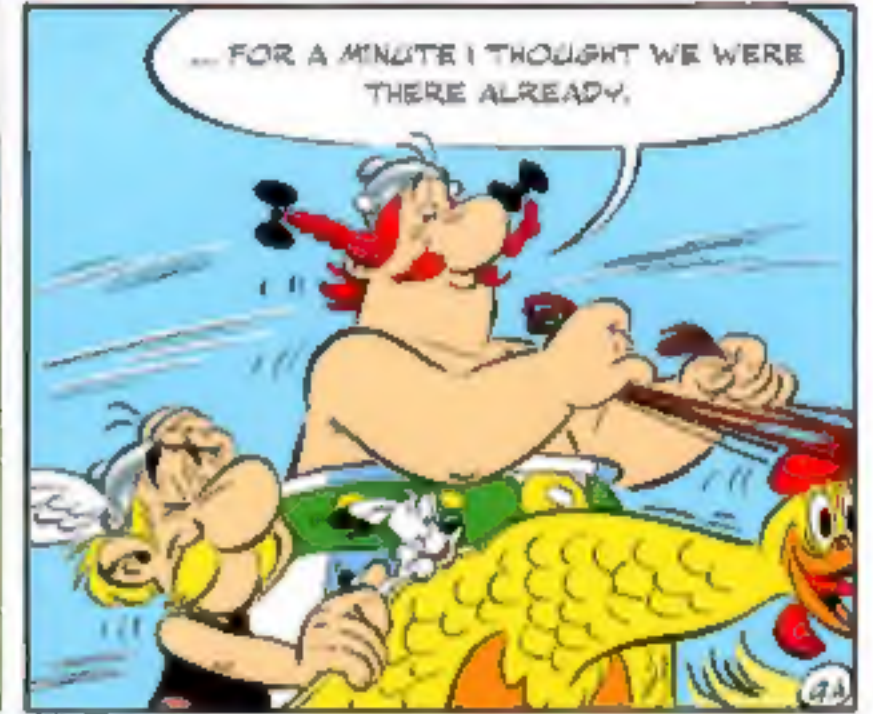
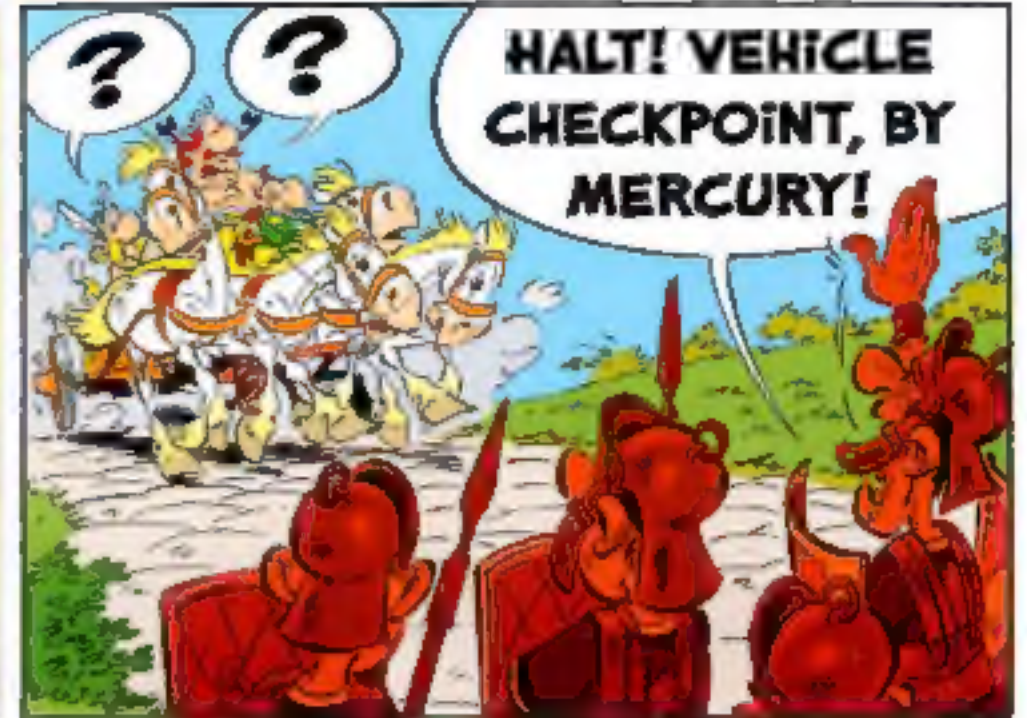
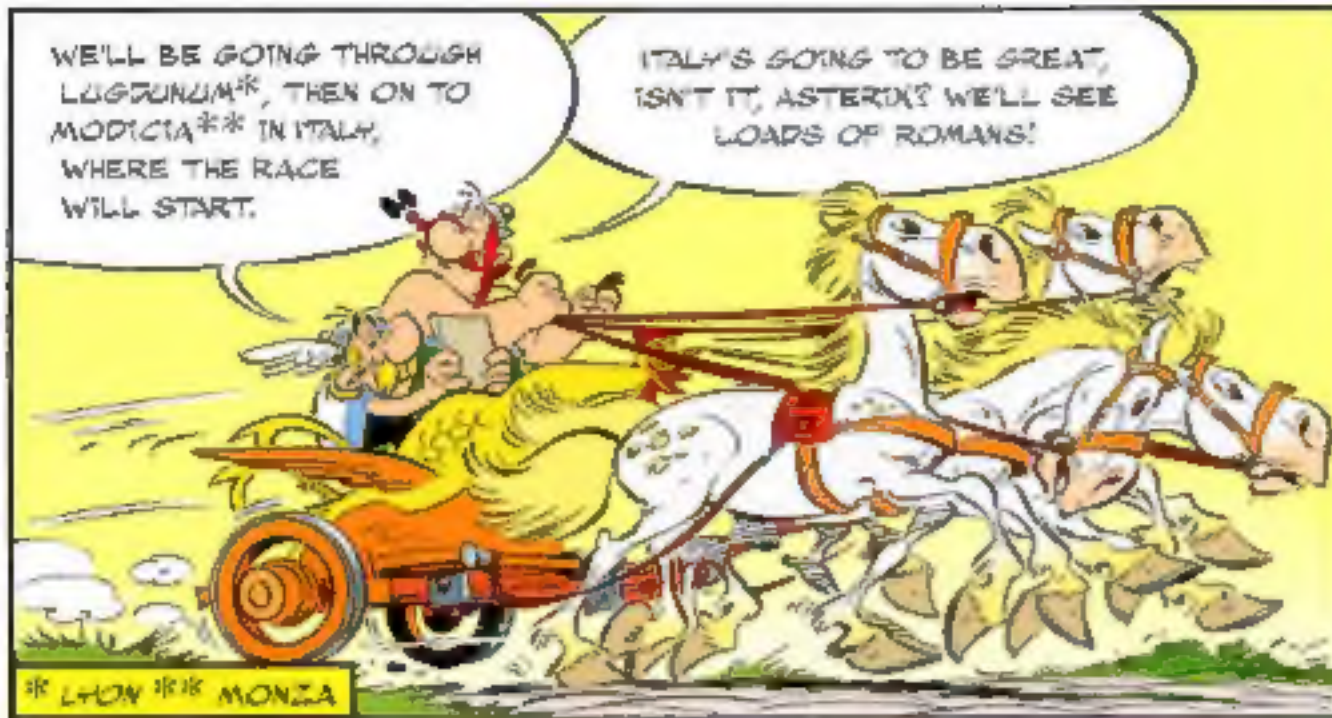
ITINERARY SUPPLIED BY
GARVM LVPVS
THE CONDIMENT OF CHAMPIONS

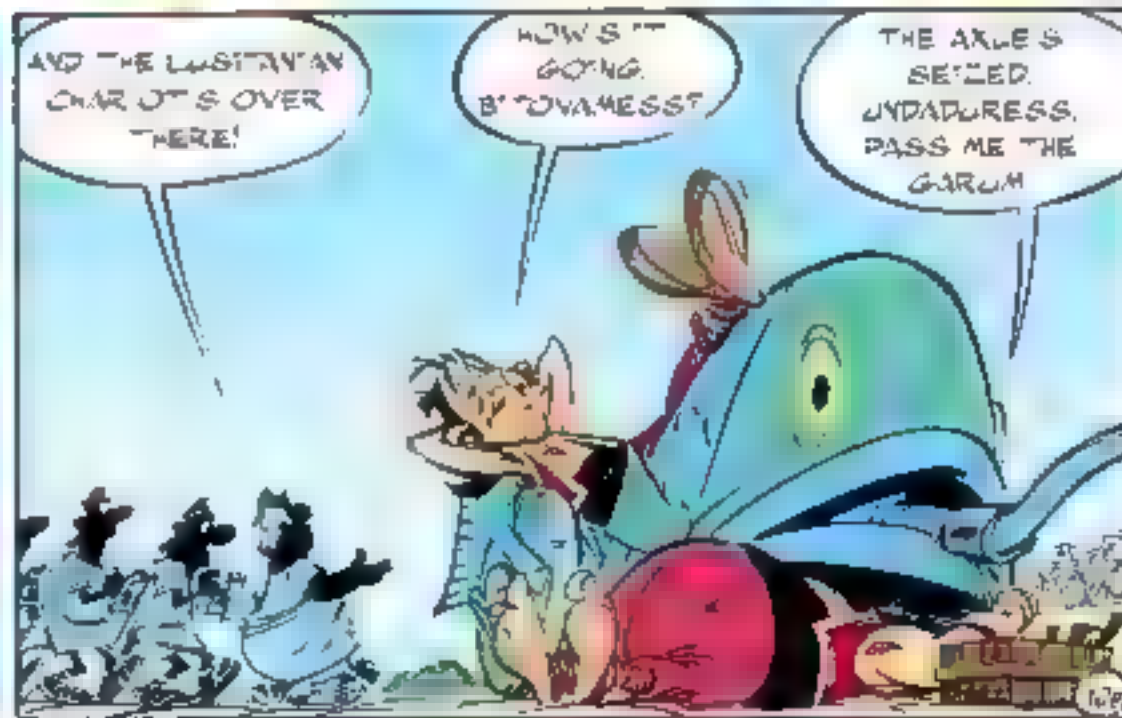
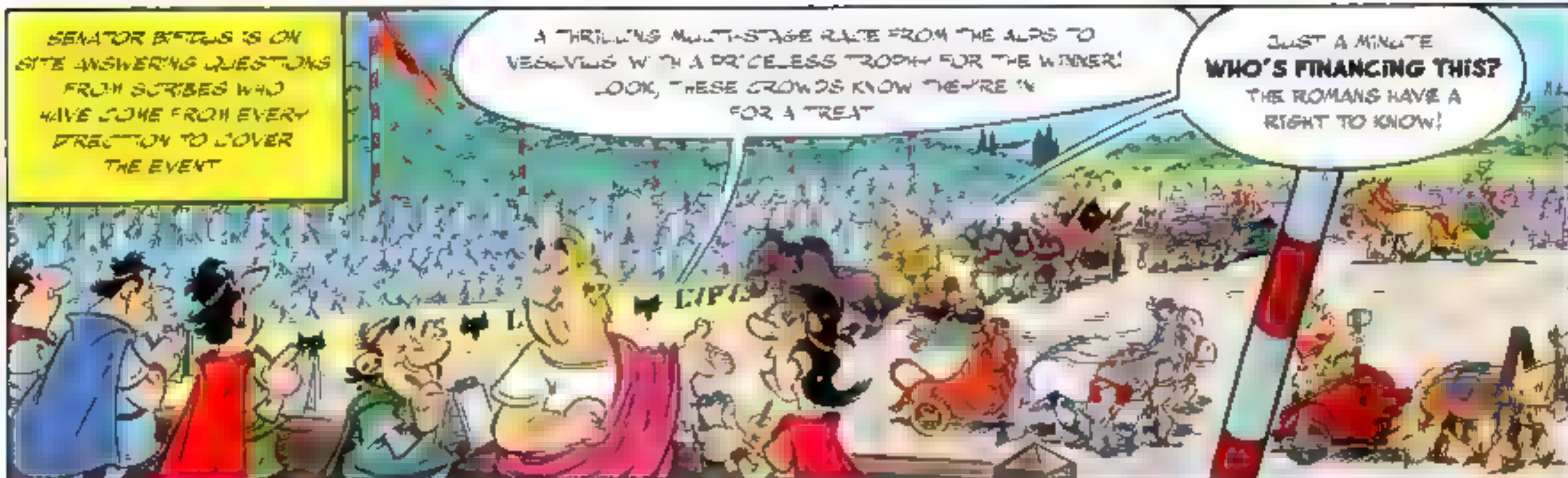


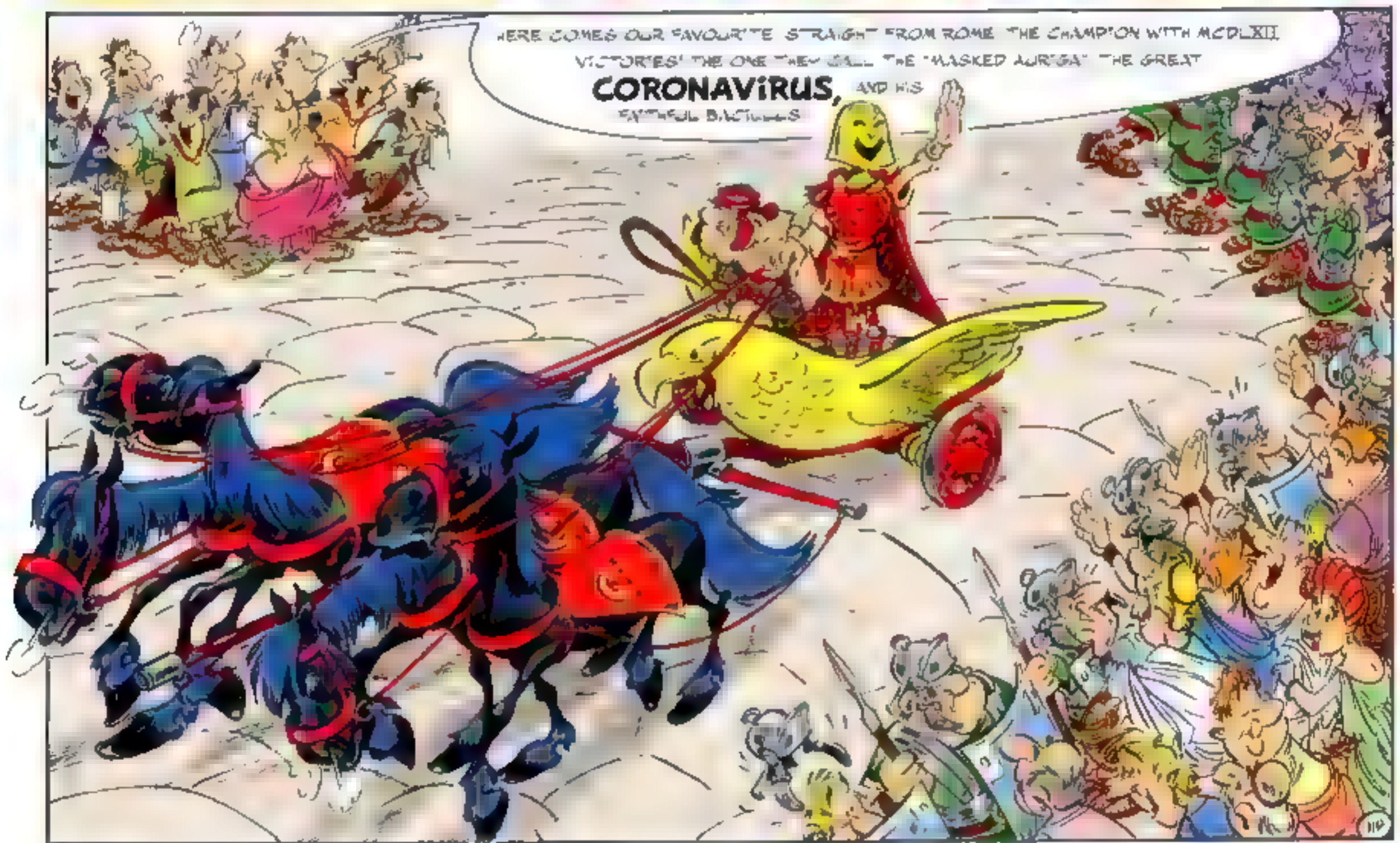
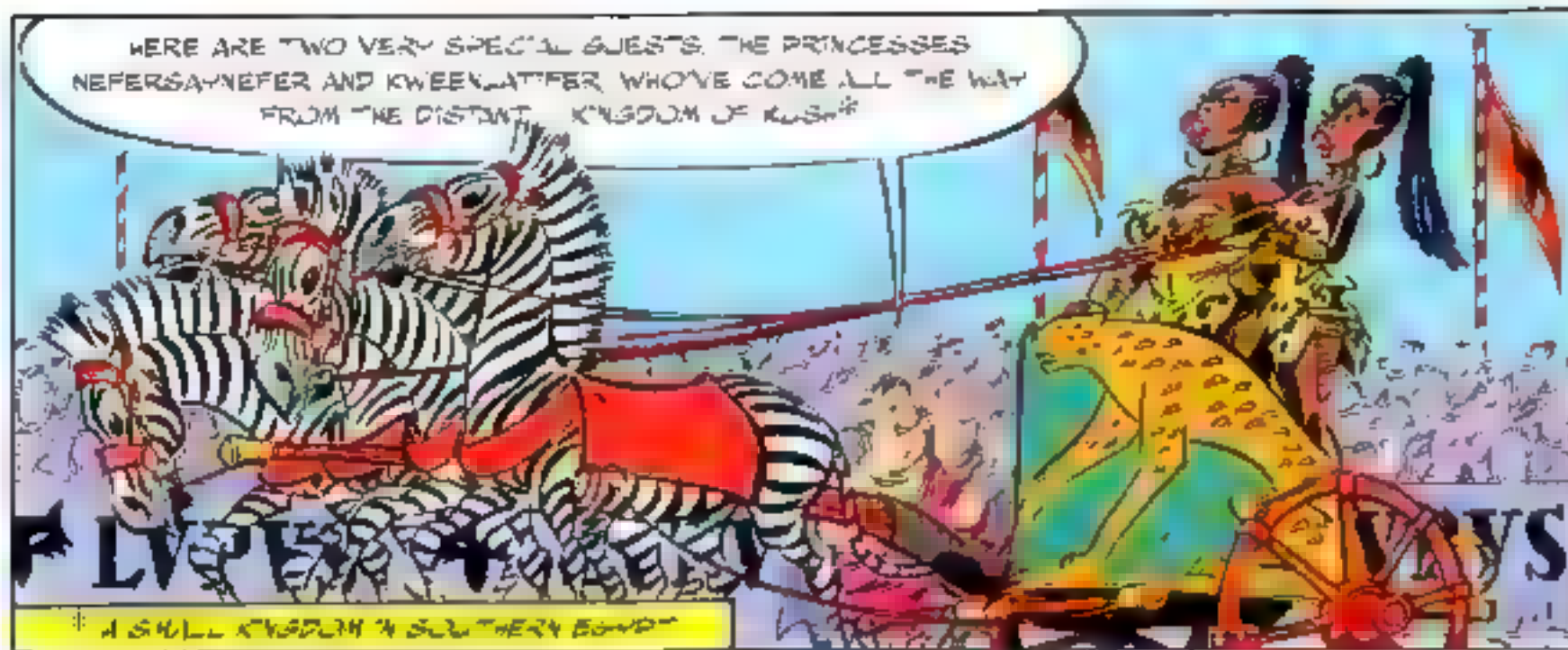
HELMETS MUST
BE WORN











IN THE NAME OF JULIUS CAESAR AND WITH
GENEROUS SPONSORSHIP FROM LUPUS
GARUM, I, BIFIDUS, PRONOUNCE ... UM ...

THE GREAT
TRANSITALIC
RACE
OPEN!

PRONOUNCE THE
GREAT TRANSITALIC
RACE OPEN!

LVPVS



THE CONDIMENT
OF CHAMPIONS

CORONAVIRUS

CORONAVIRUS

CORONAVIRUS

LOOKS LIKE IT'S
ALL ABOUT THAT
ROMAN

WELL, WHAT DO
YOU EXPECT?

HE'S GOT A NICE
SMILE

IT'S A
MASK
OBEJX

THE WINNER WILL RECEIVE
THE TRANSITALIC CUP, A
SYMBOL OF OUR GLORIOUS,
FAR-REACHING
ROMAN ROADS ...

OR ITS
EQUIVALENT
IN SESTER

... OR ITS
EQUIVALENT IN
SESTERCES!!!

HEHE! WE'RE HERE
FOR THE EQUIVALENT
MY BOY!

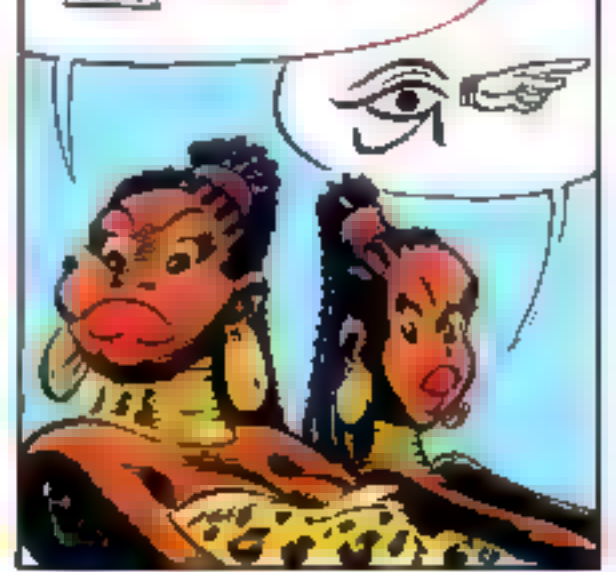
STAND BY FOR THE START ...



ONE OF THE KUSHITE COMPETITORS IS SMILING AT ME. ASTERIA DO YOU THINK SHE LIKES ME?



GOAT = ♥♥♥♥



WHEN I STRIKE THE GONG ...



CORONAVIRUS CORONAVIRUS CORONAVIRUS



THAT TREACHEROUS ROMAN'S STARTED GO ON OBELIX GOOD!

OK HOLD ON - SHT DUGMA'N!



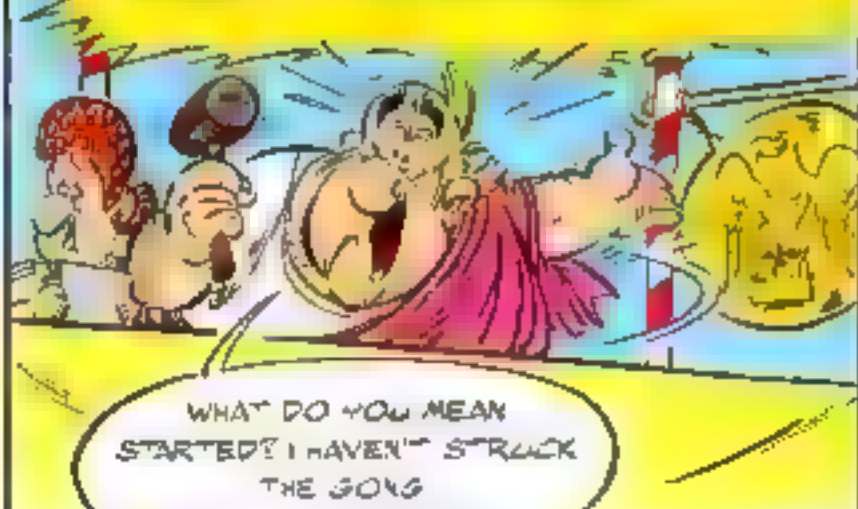
The Gauls are leaving too! Let's go!

THE GOTH'S RIGHT, WOULD YOU BELIEVE! LET'S LEAVE!

YES LET'S GO BY D'YV GO



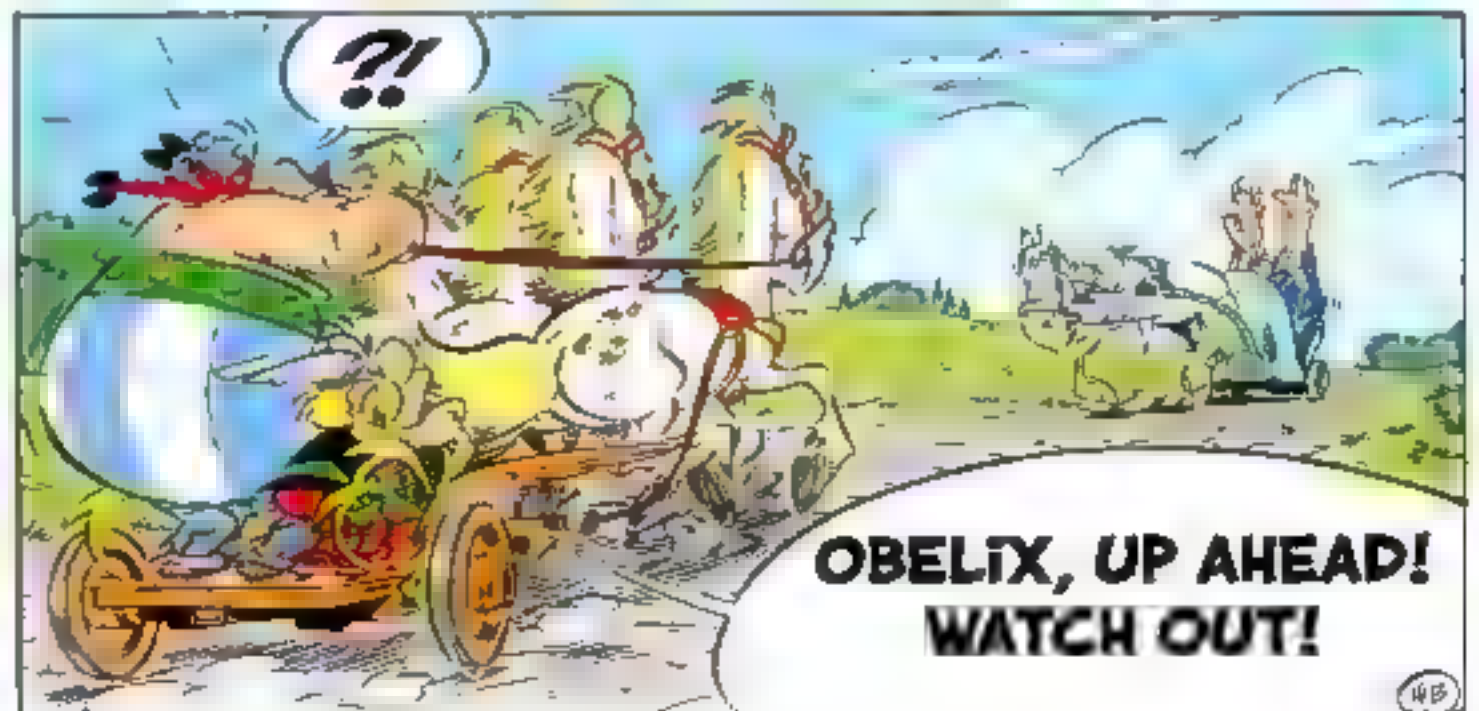
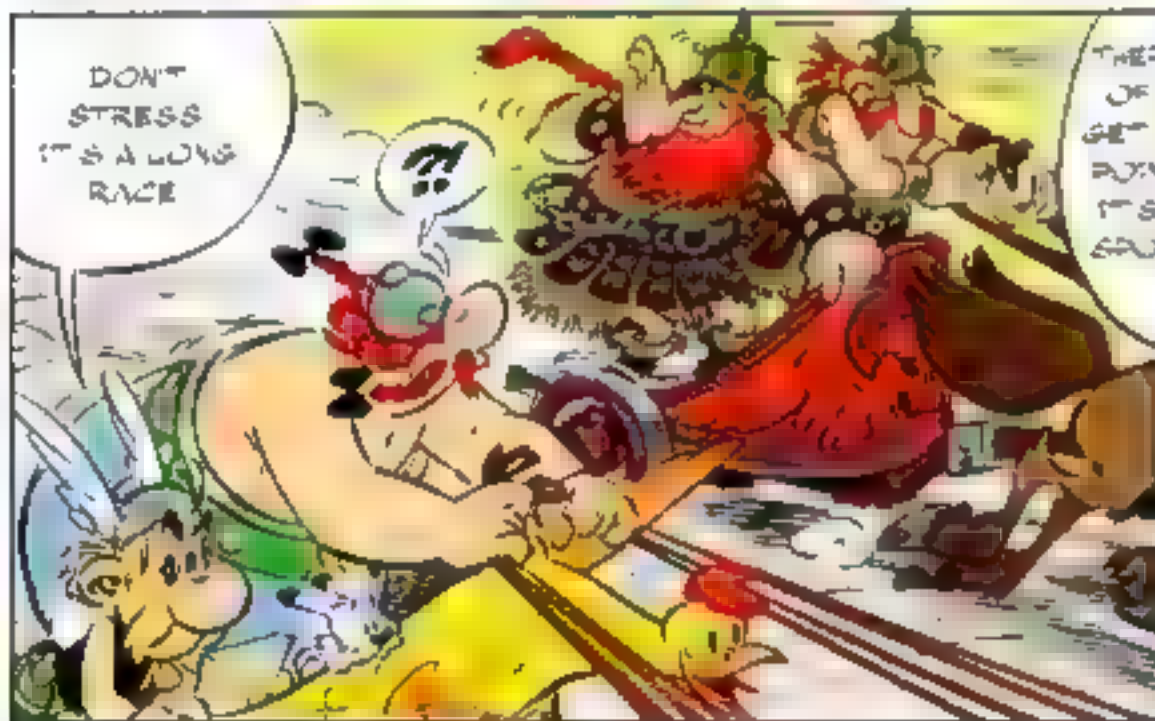
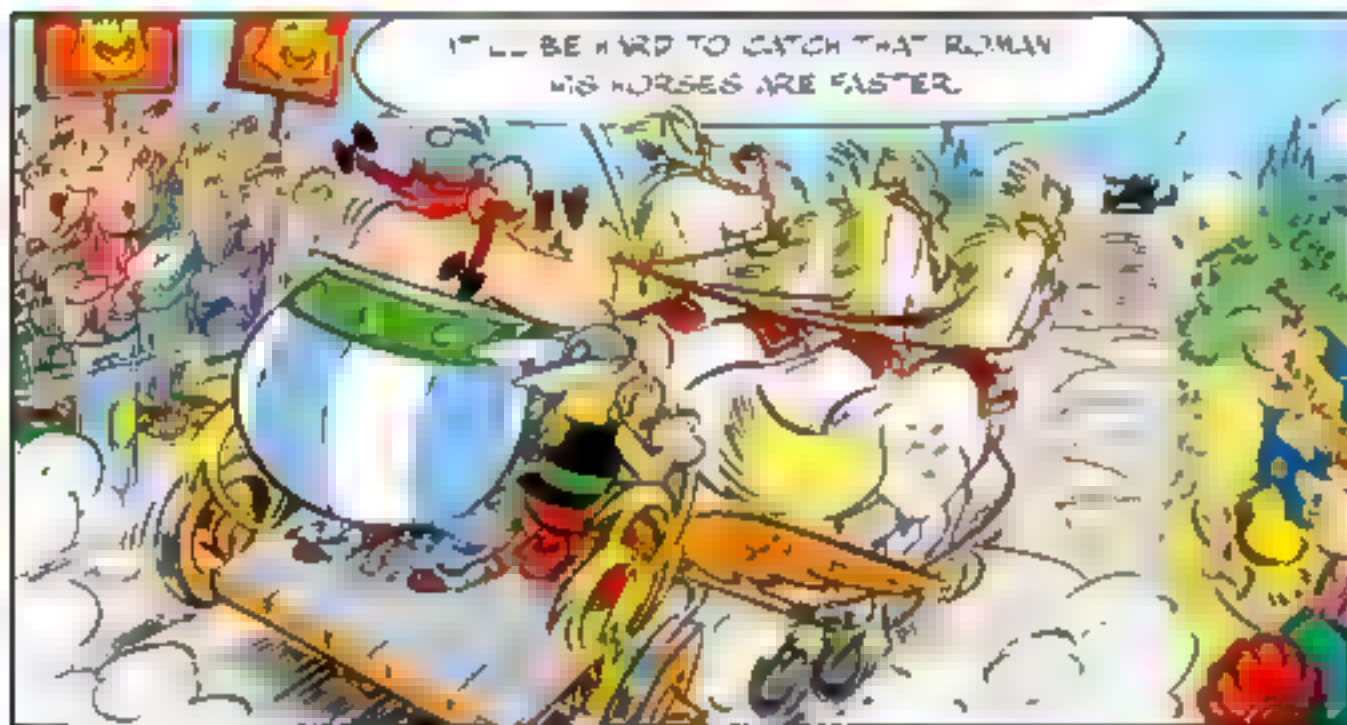
THEY'VE STARTED! THEY'VE STARTED!

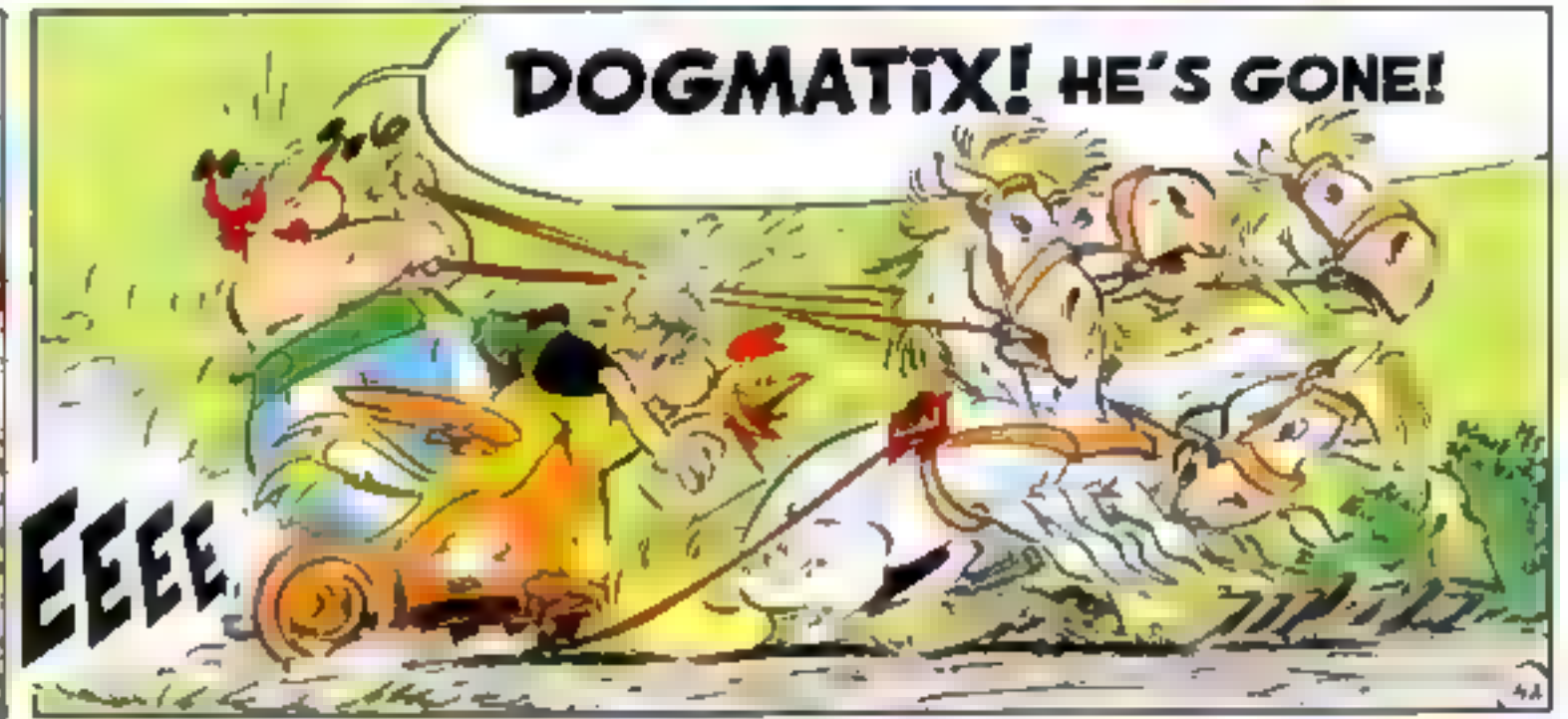


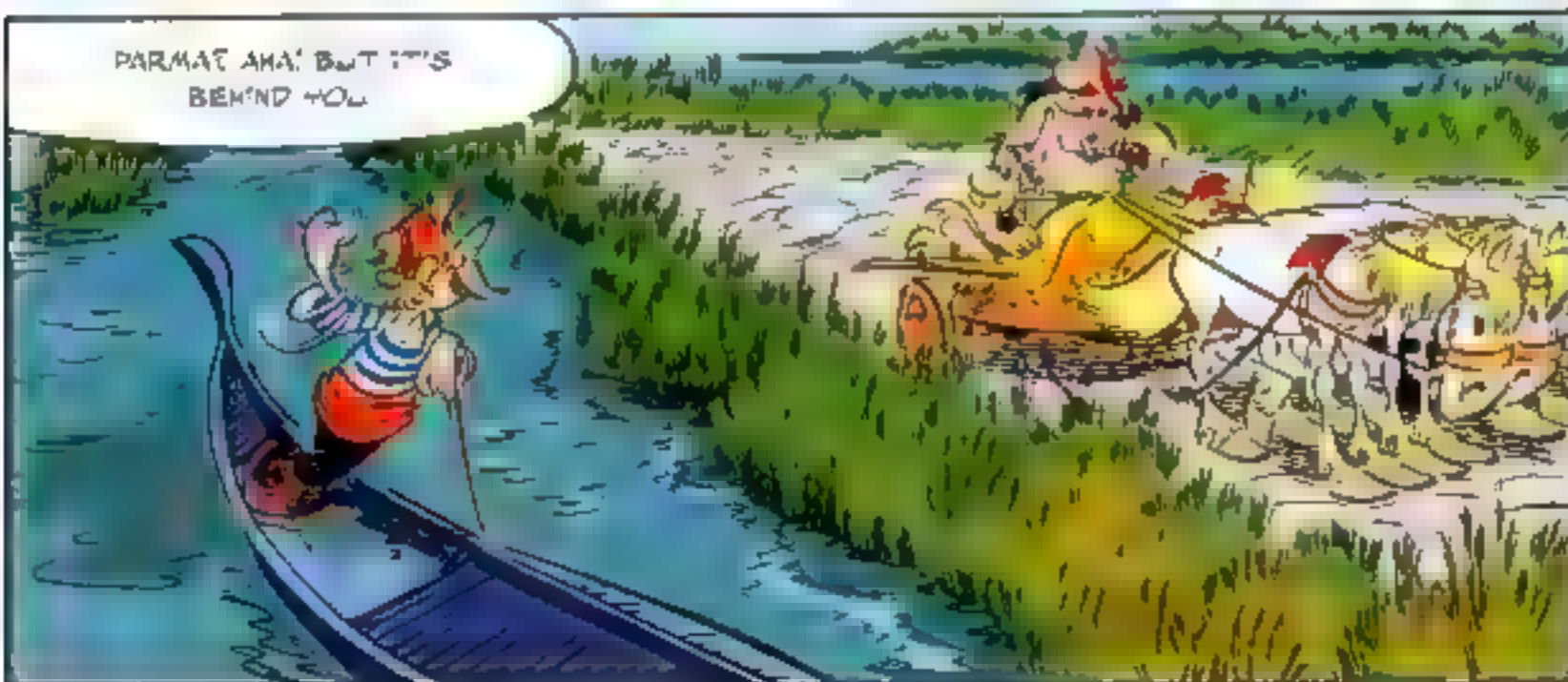
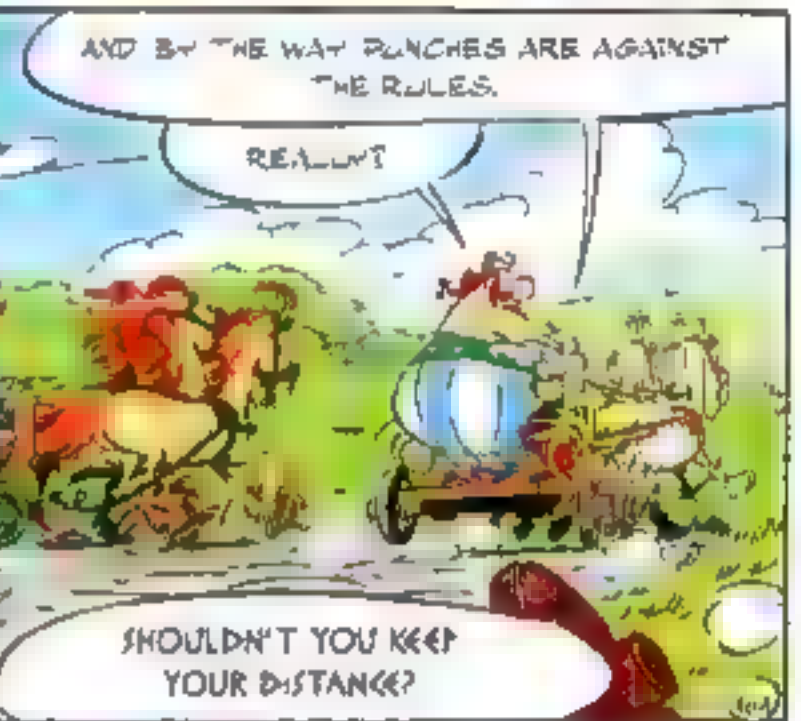
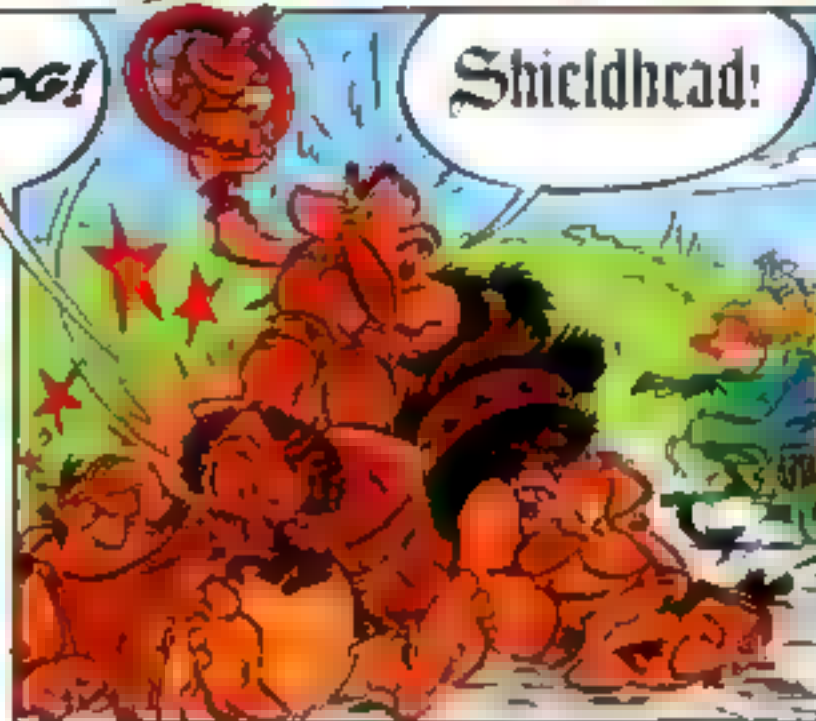
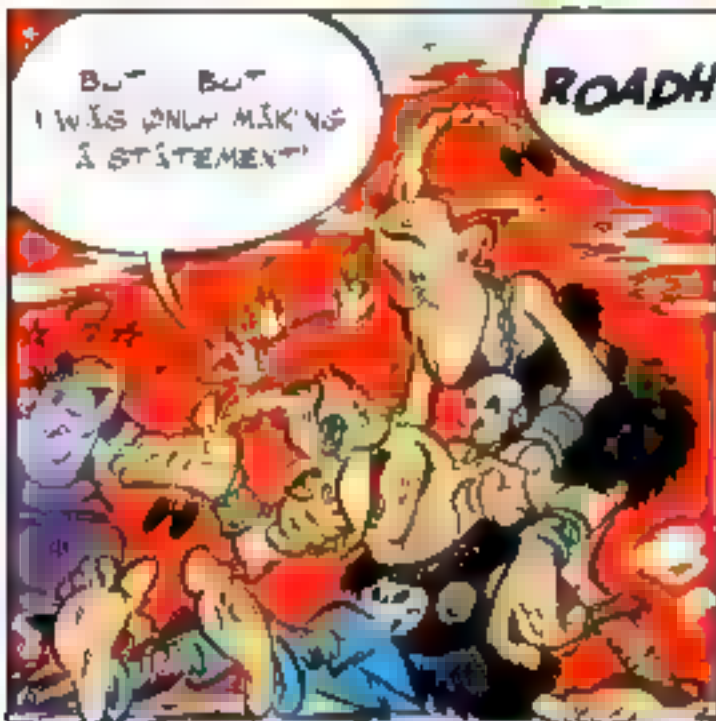
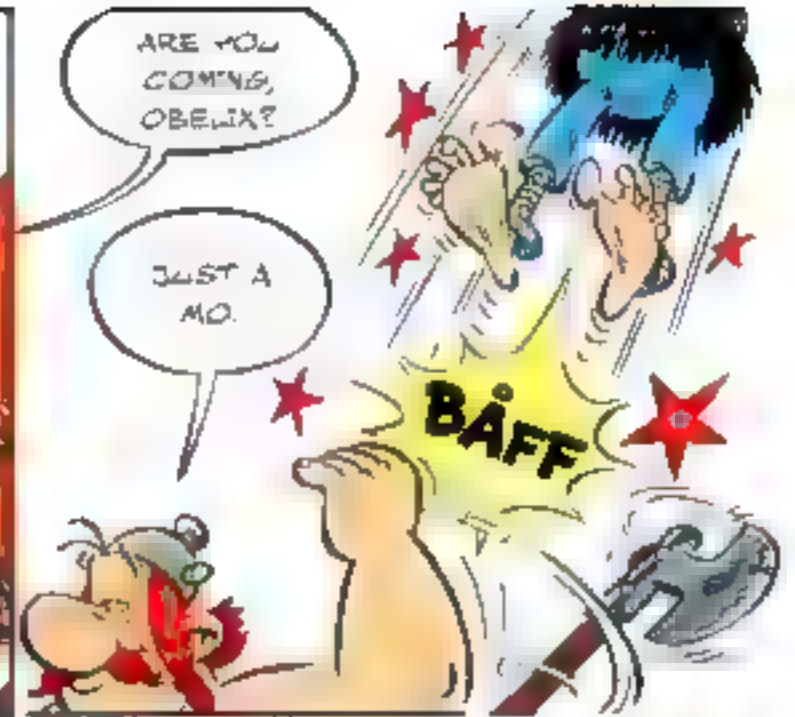
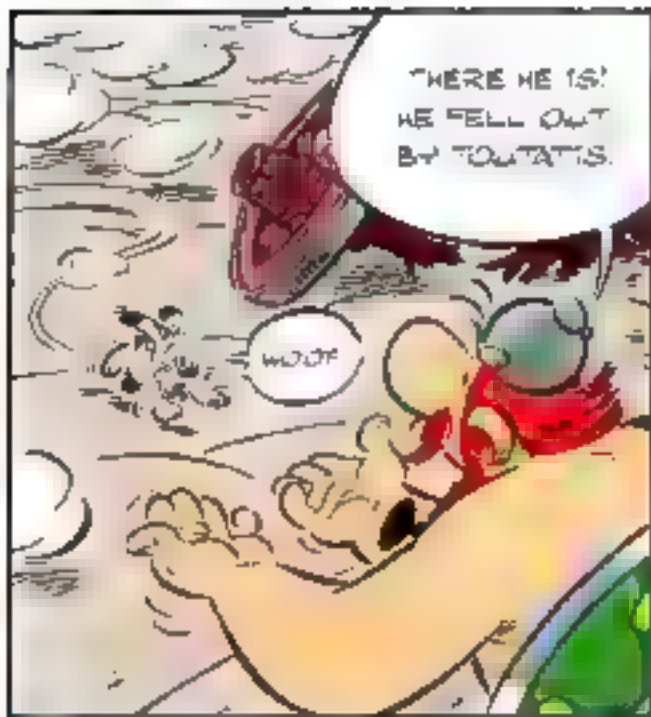
WURRY UP BITOVAMESS, WE'RE GOING TO BE LATE

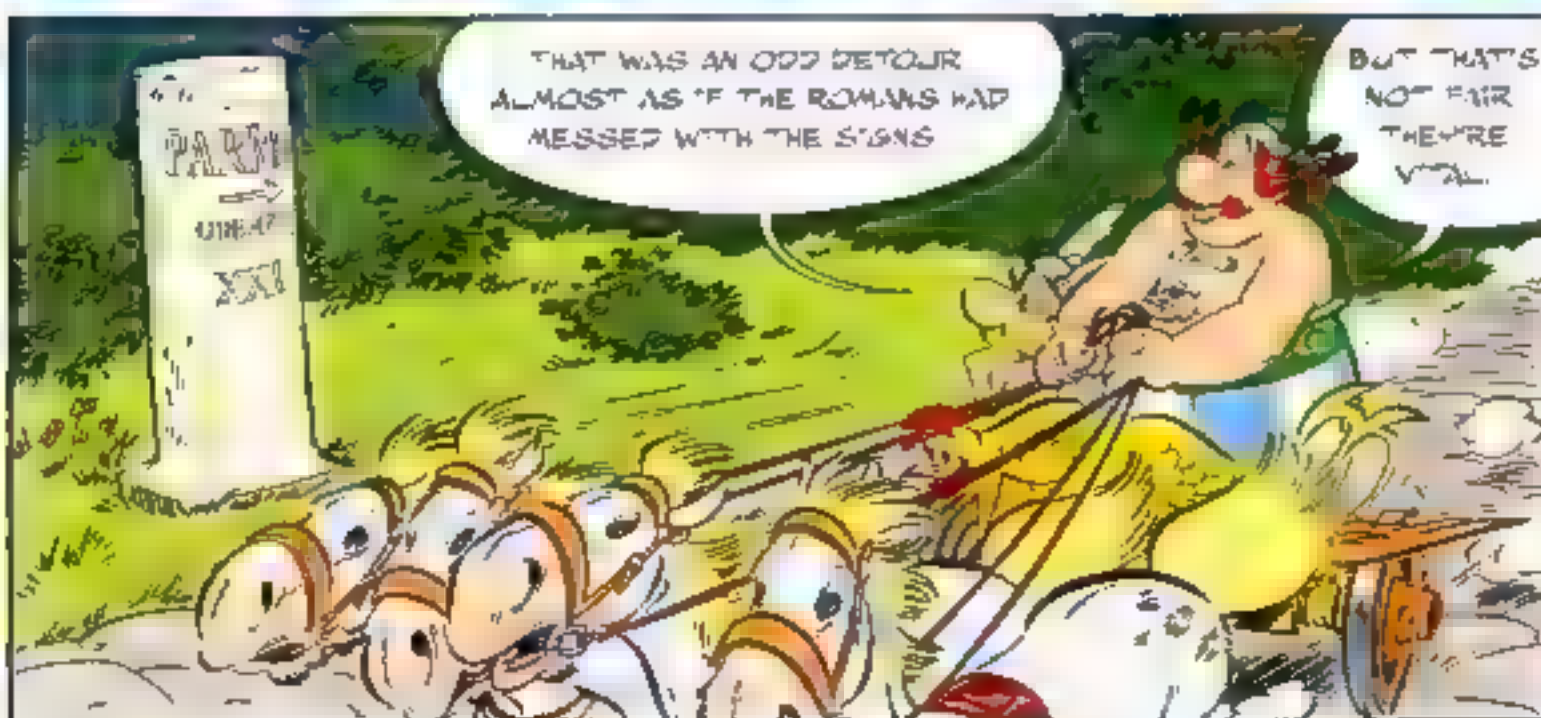
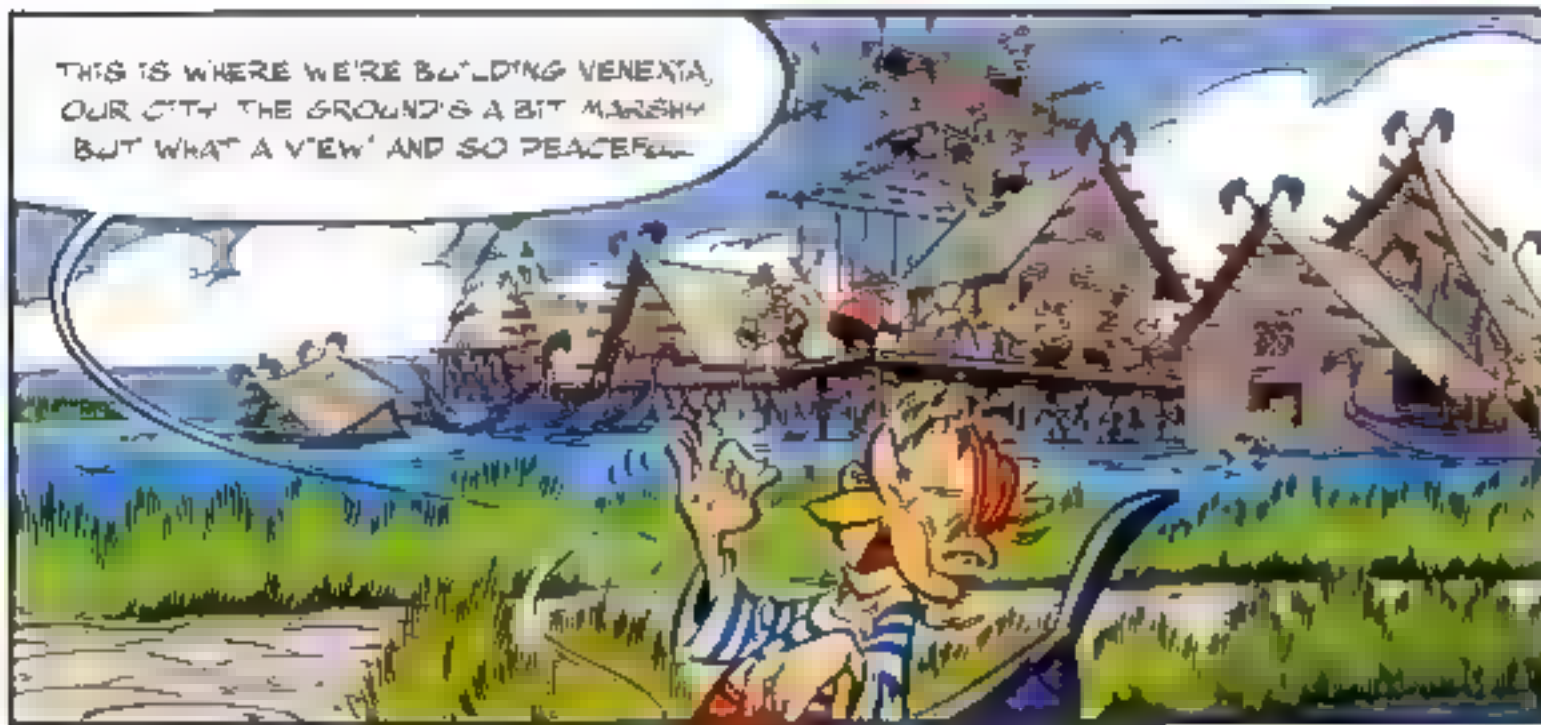
I'D BE SURPRISED, UNDAURESS, I HAVEN'T HEARD THE GONG.

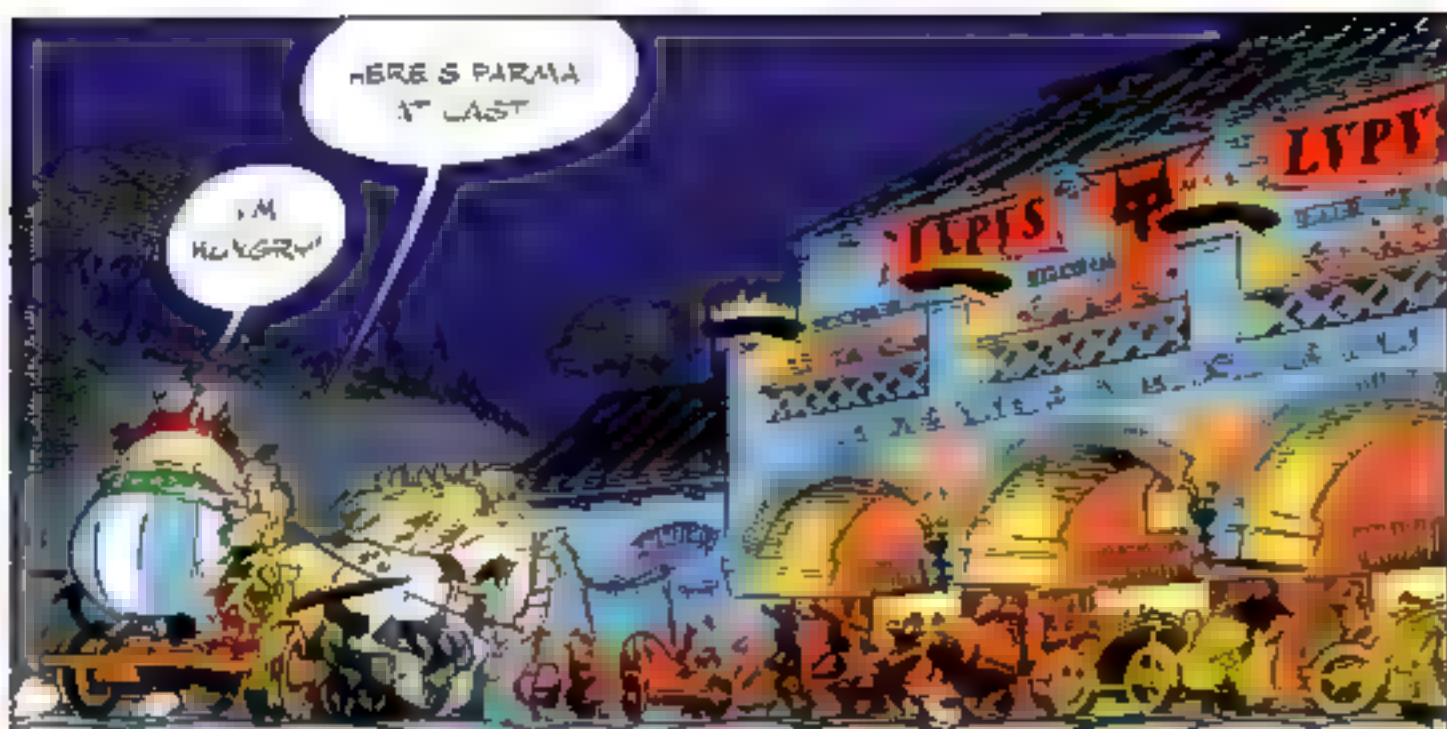


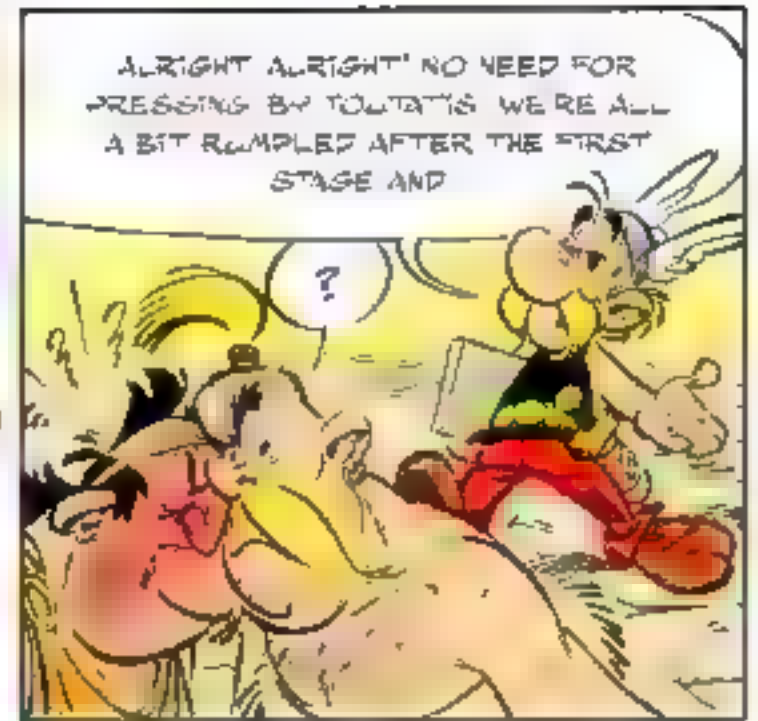


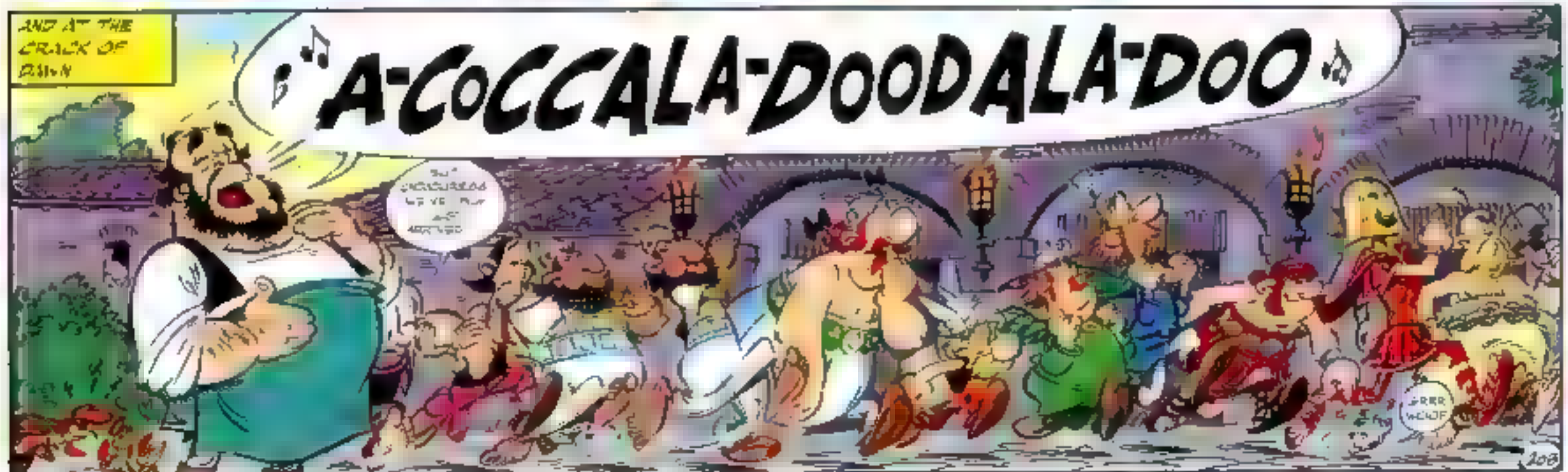
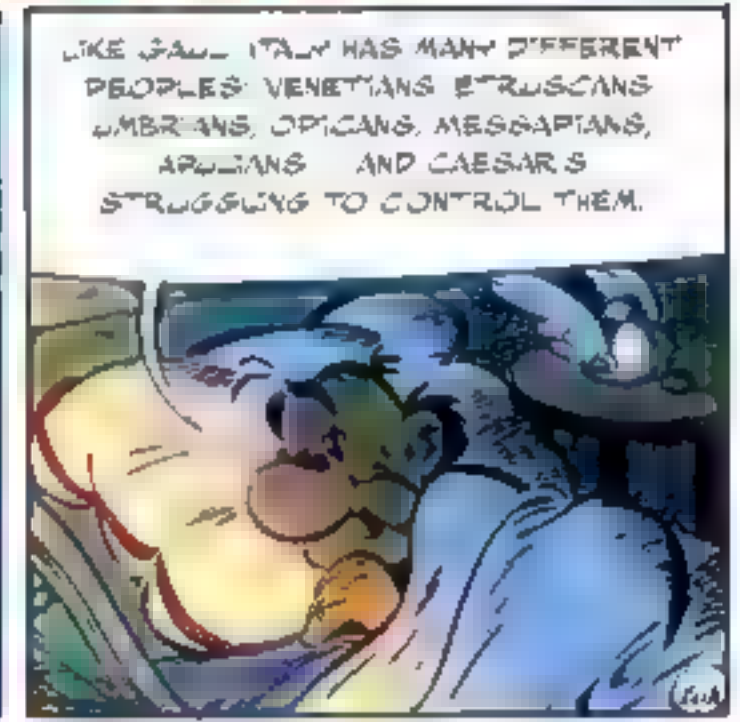
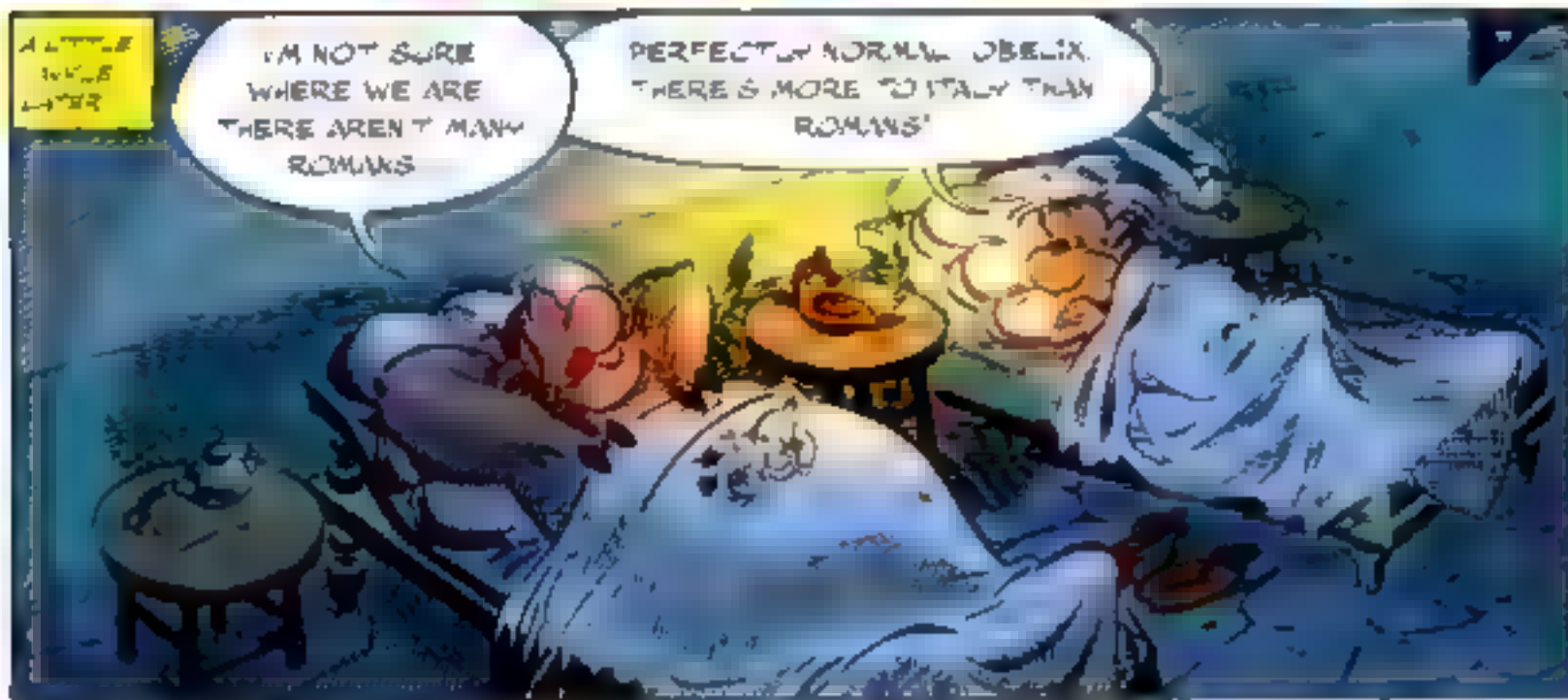


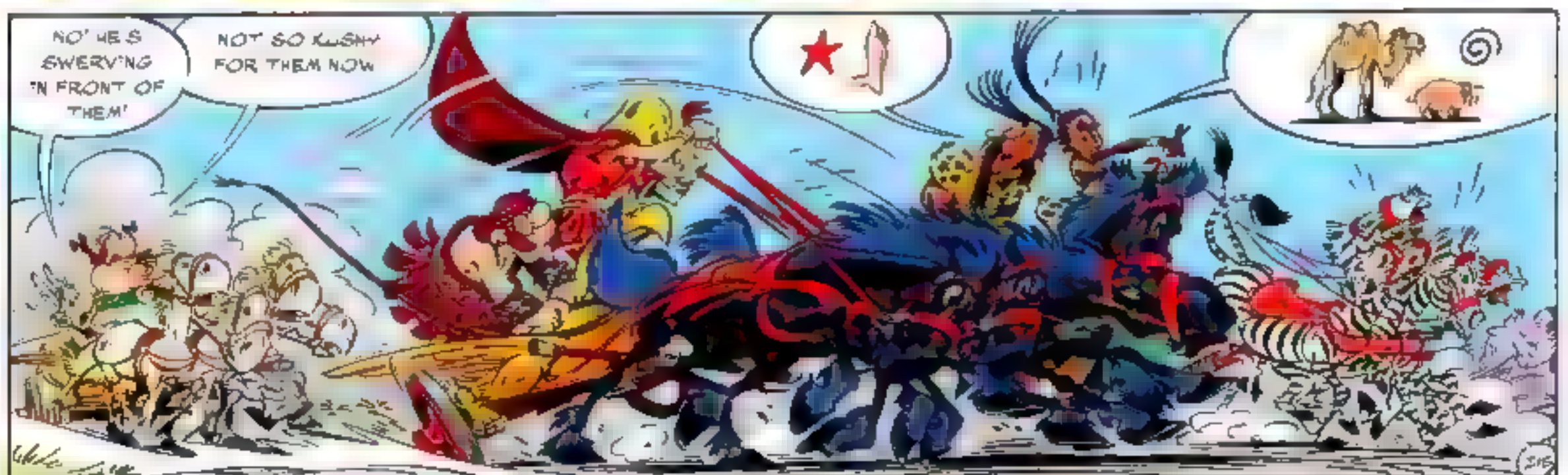
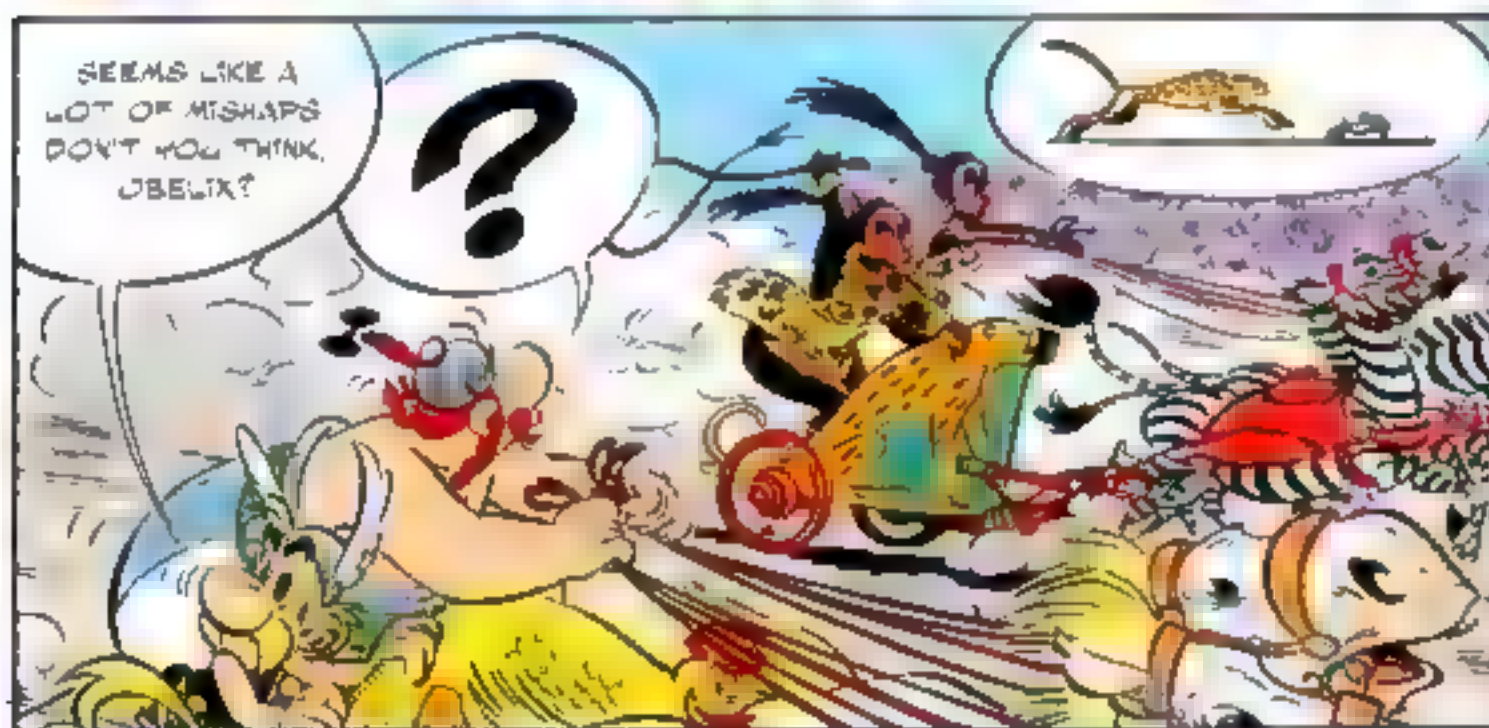
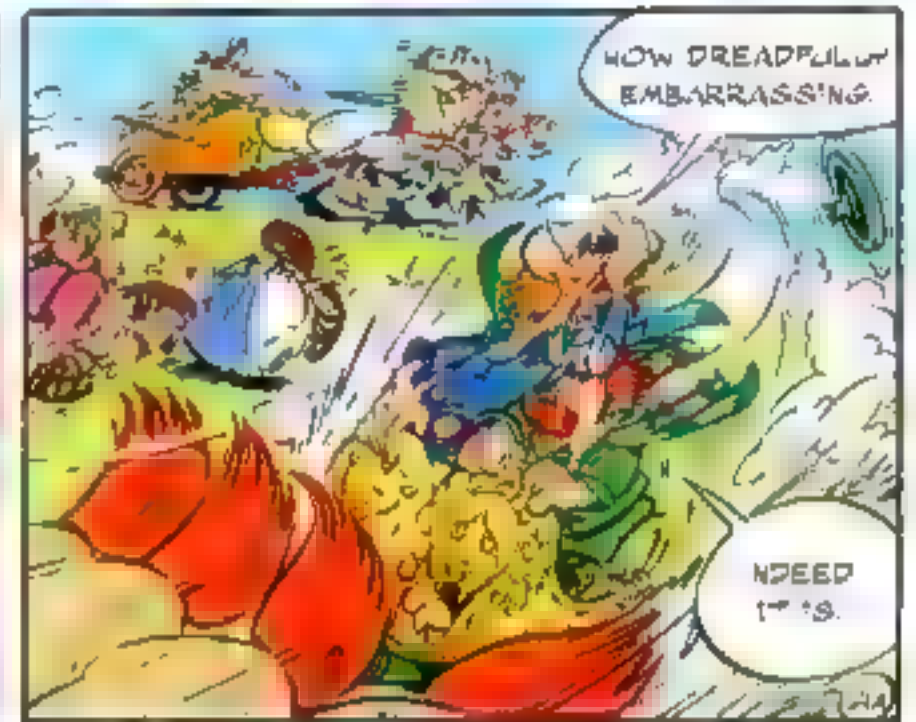
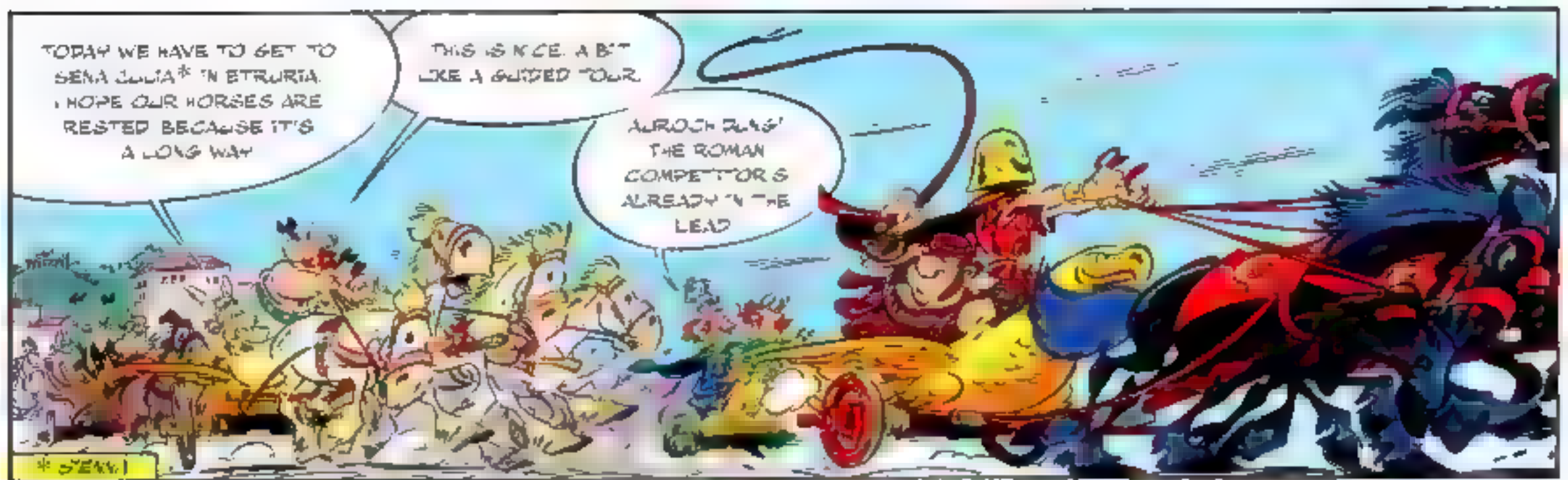


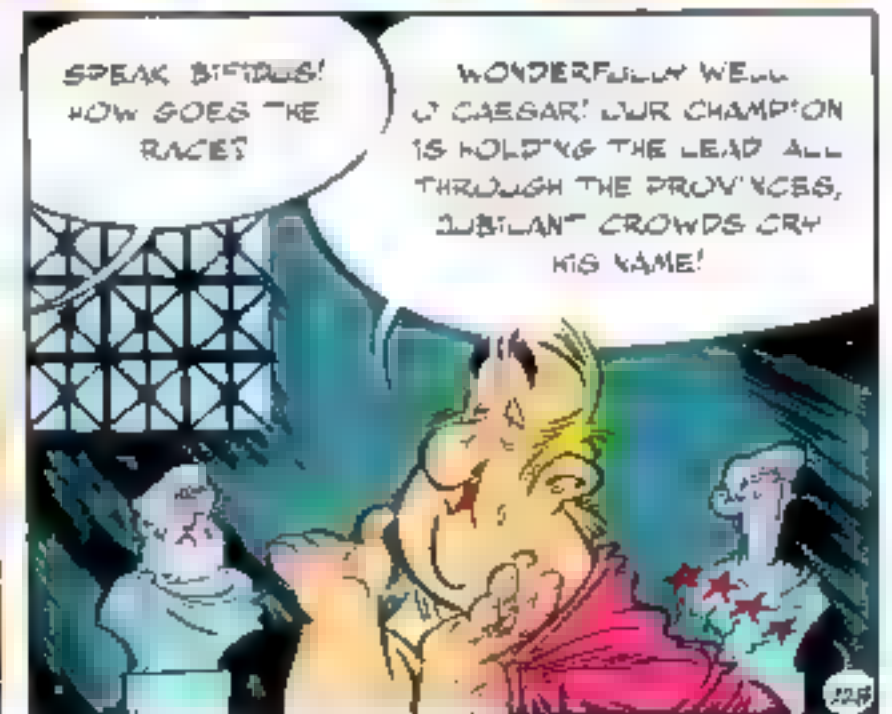
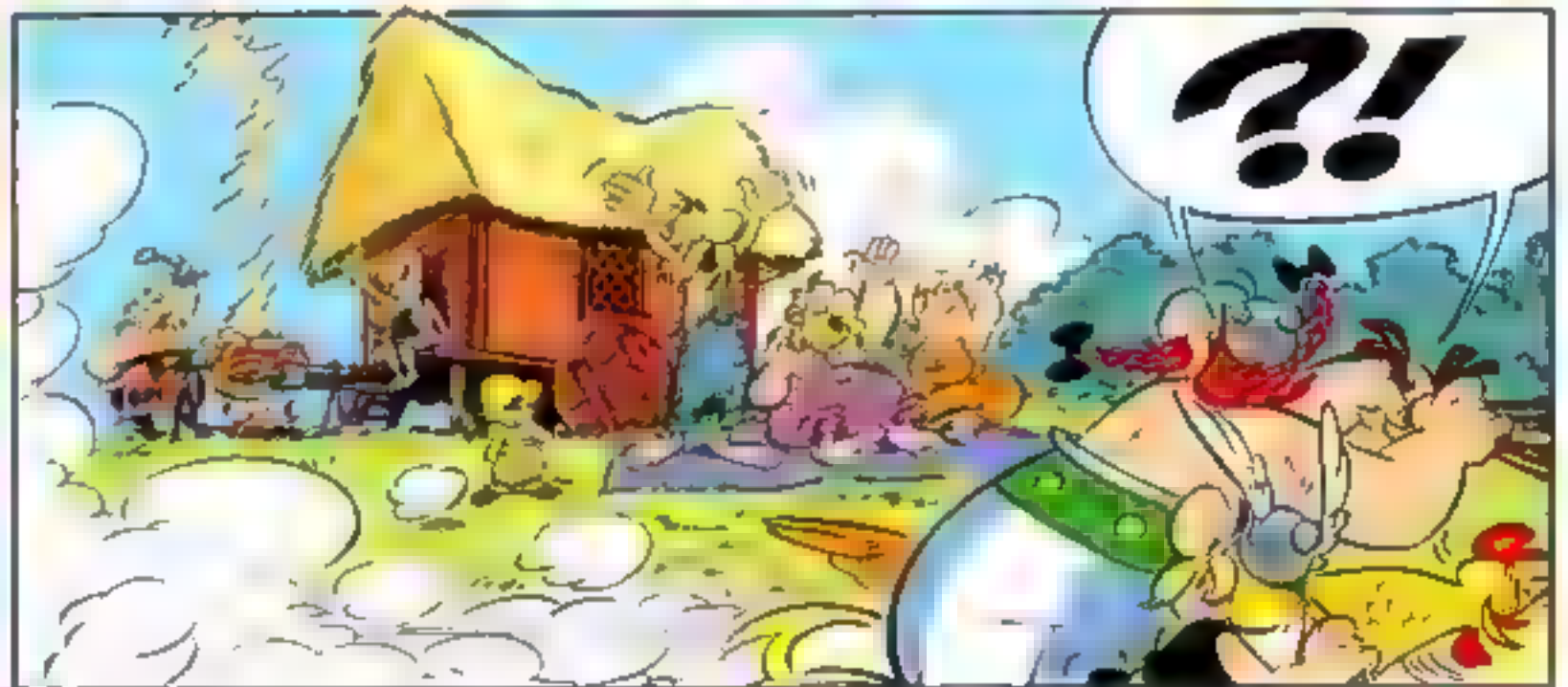
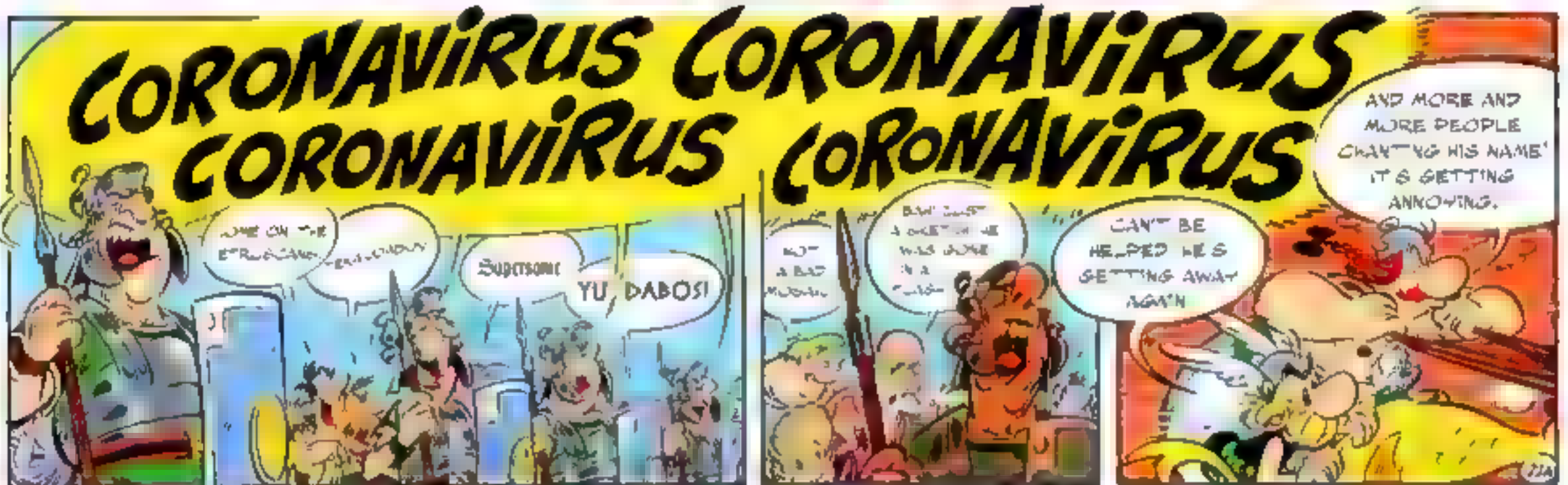


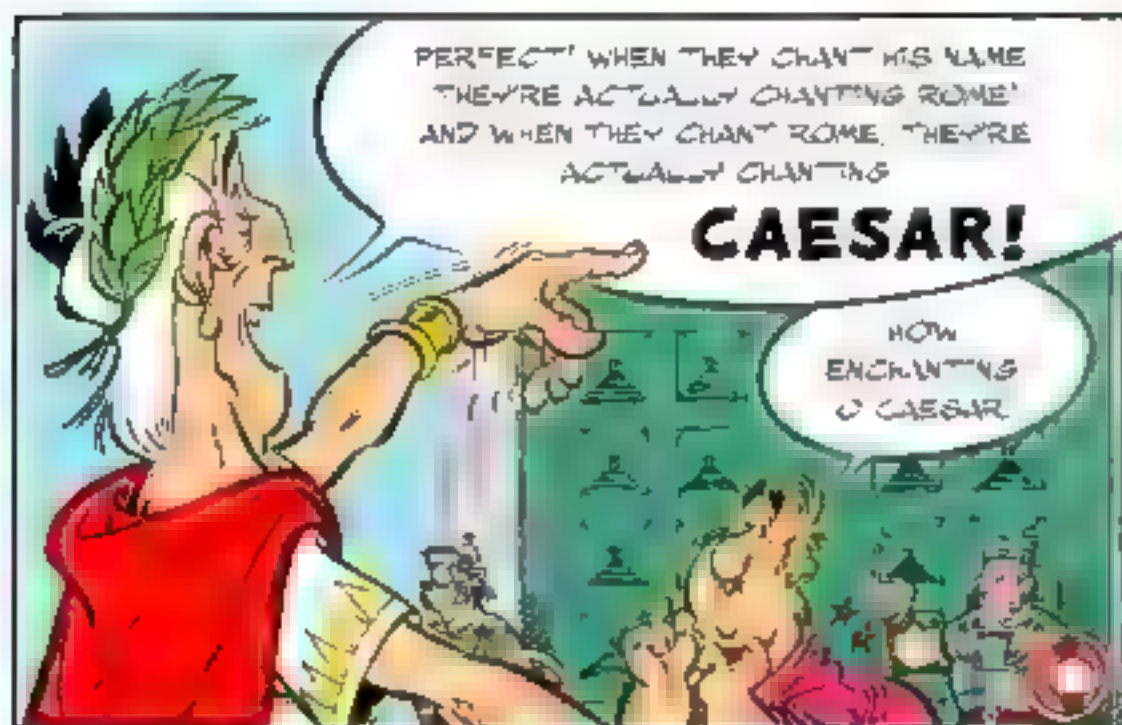


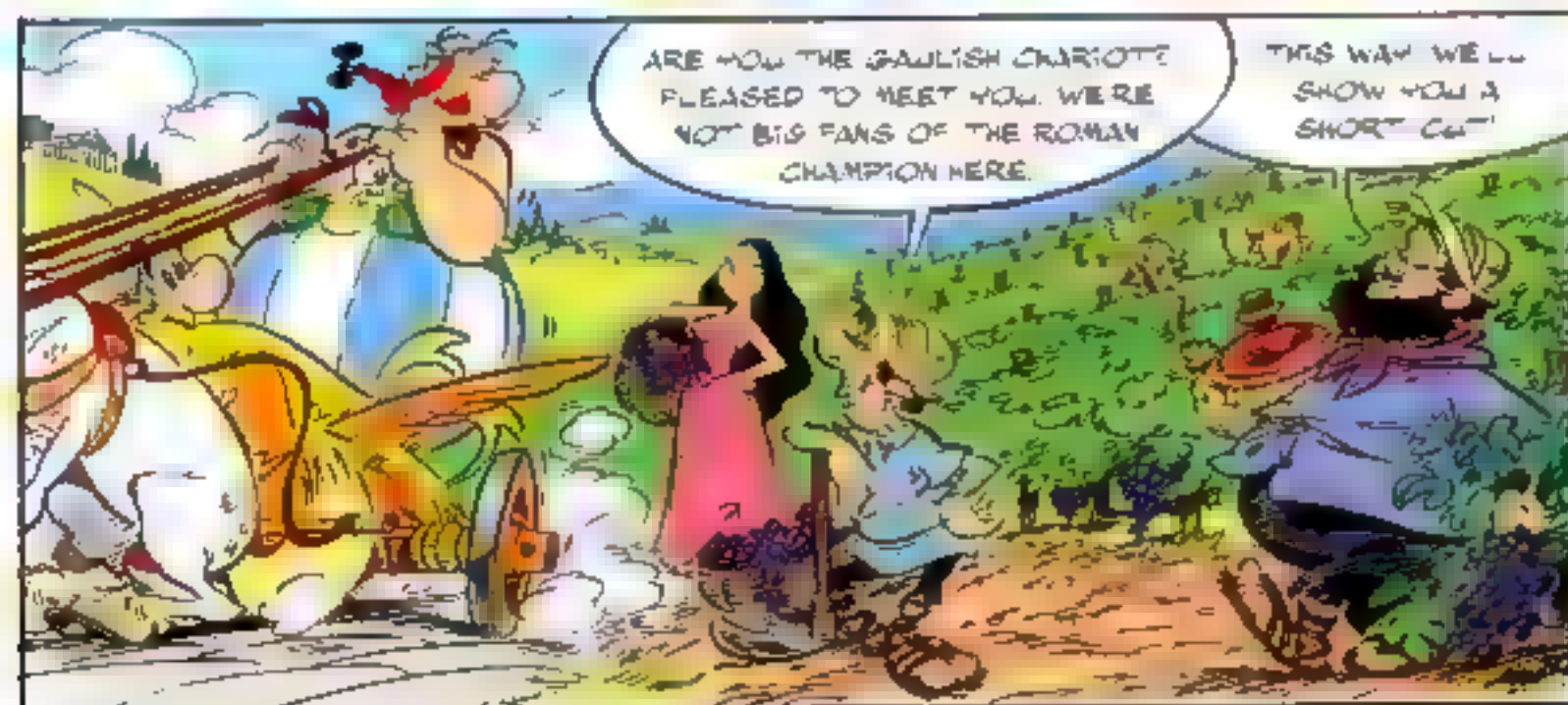
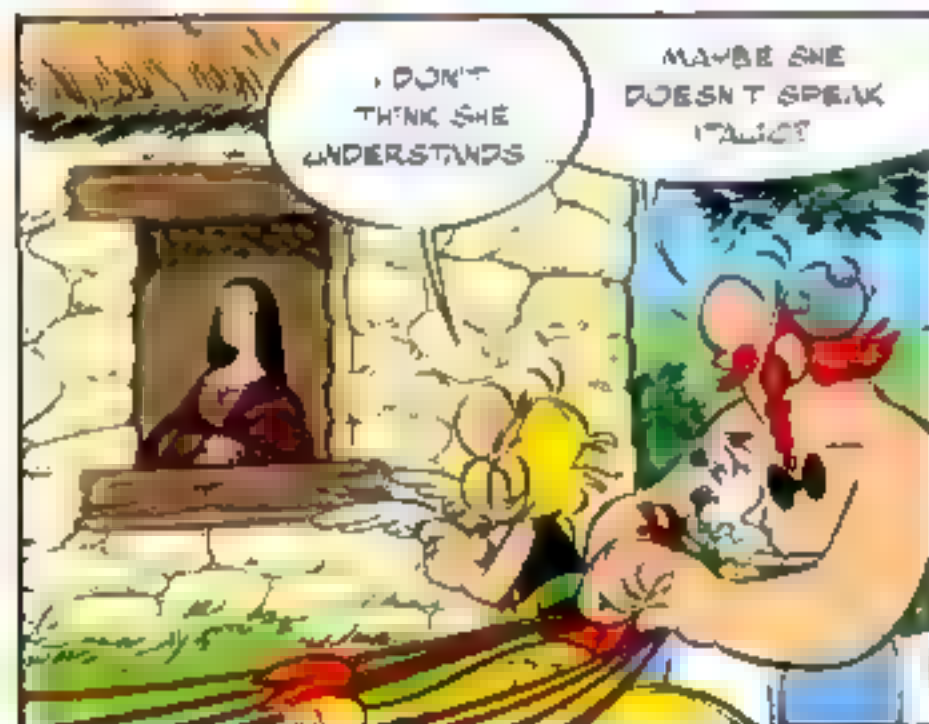
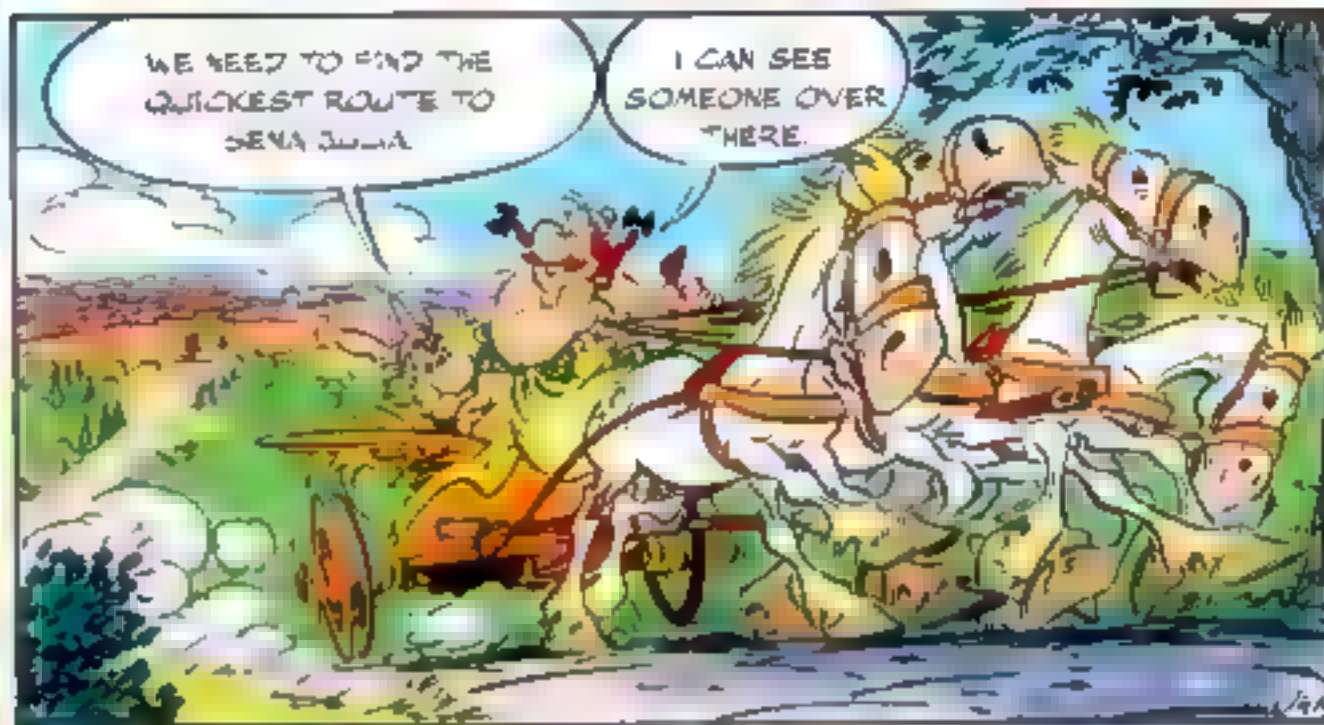
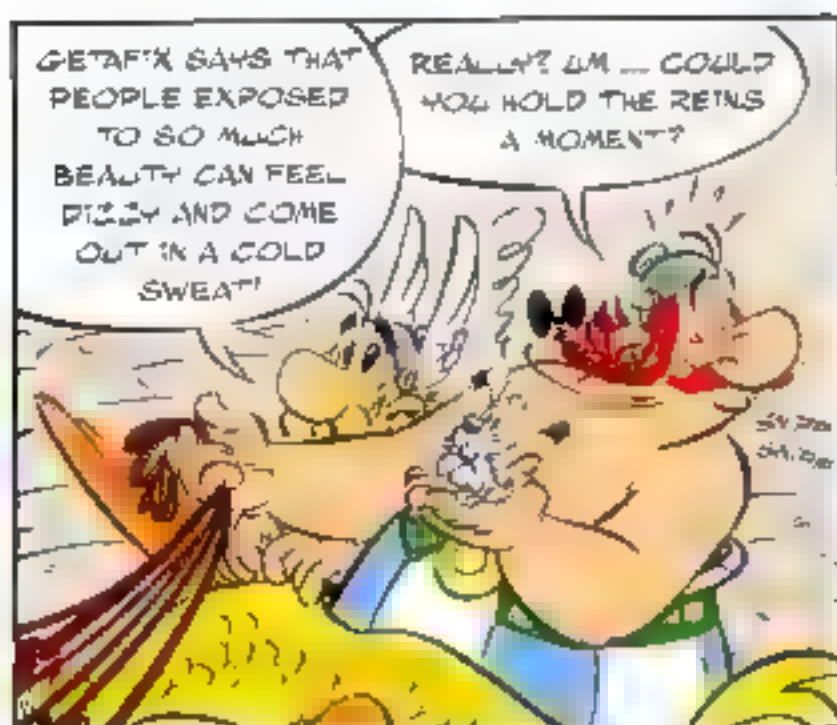


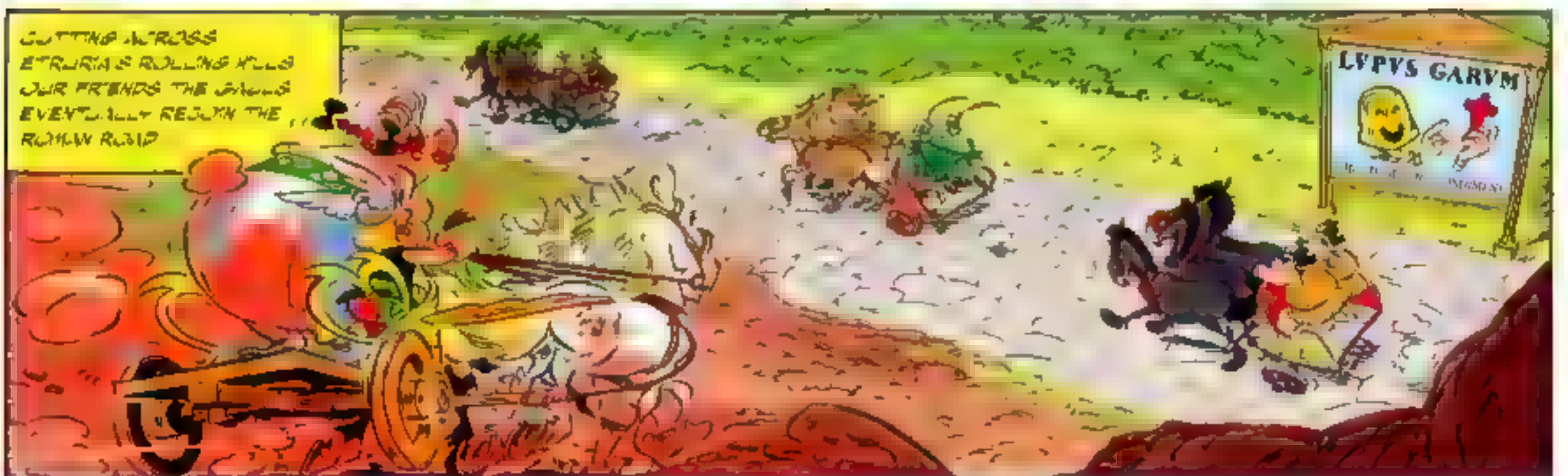
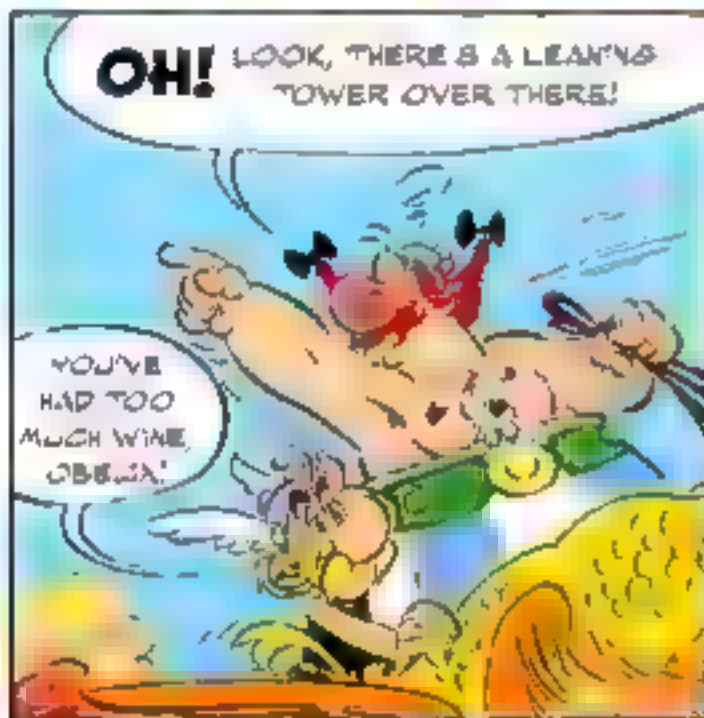
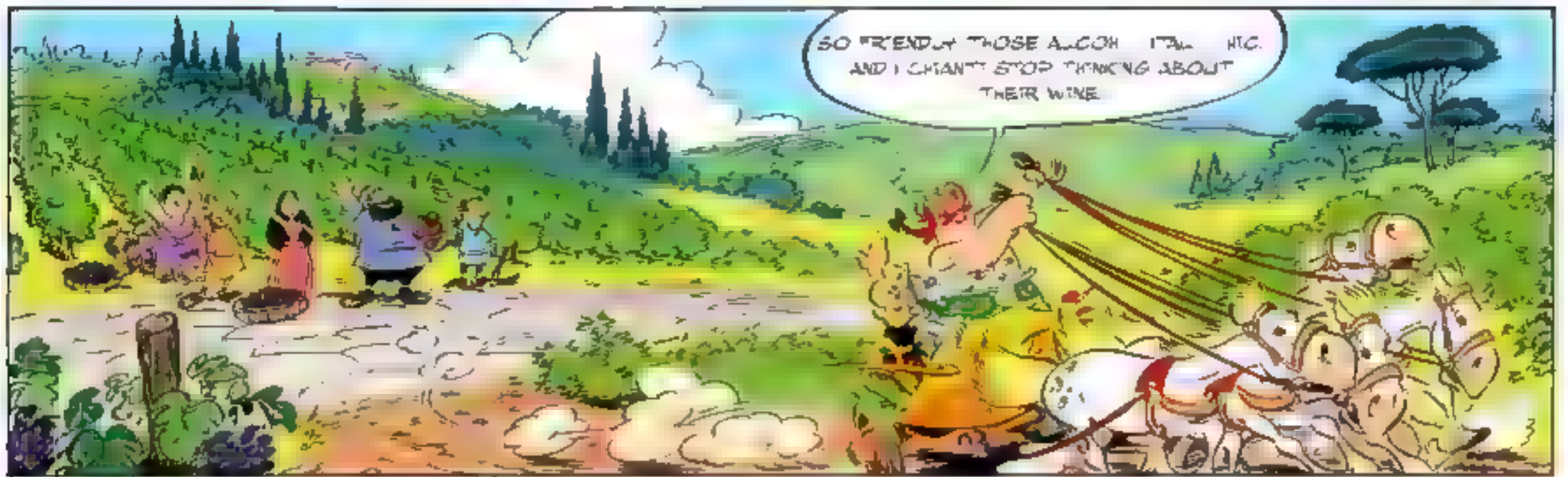




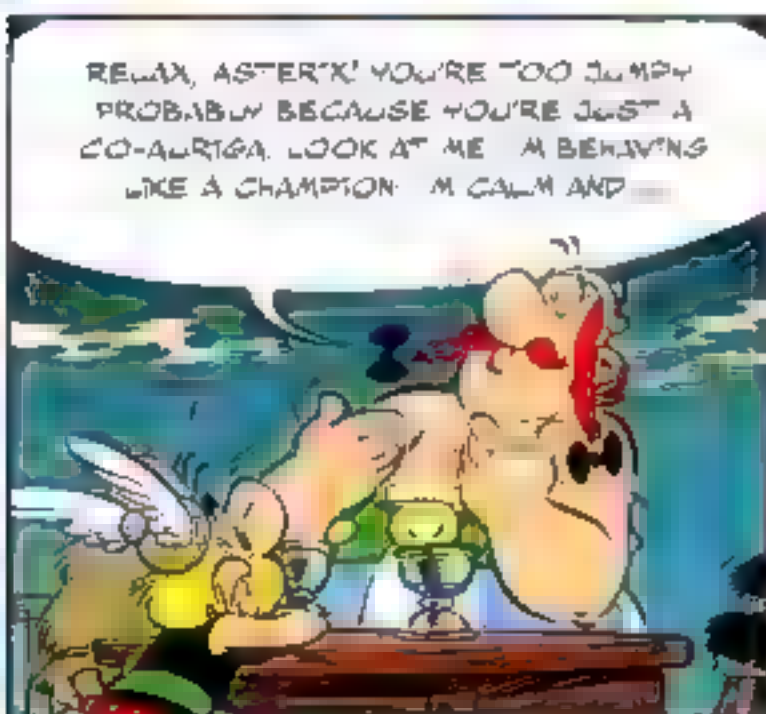
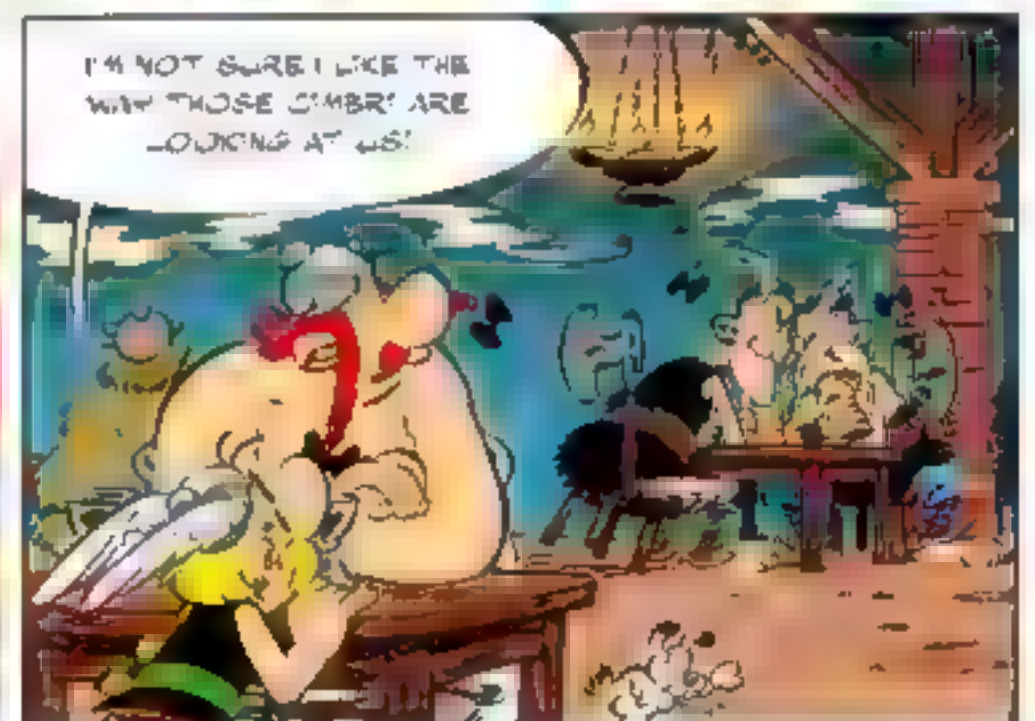
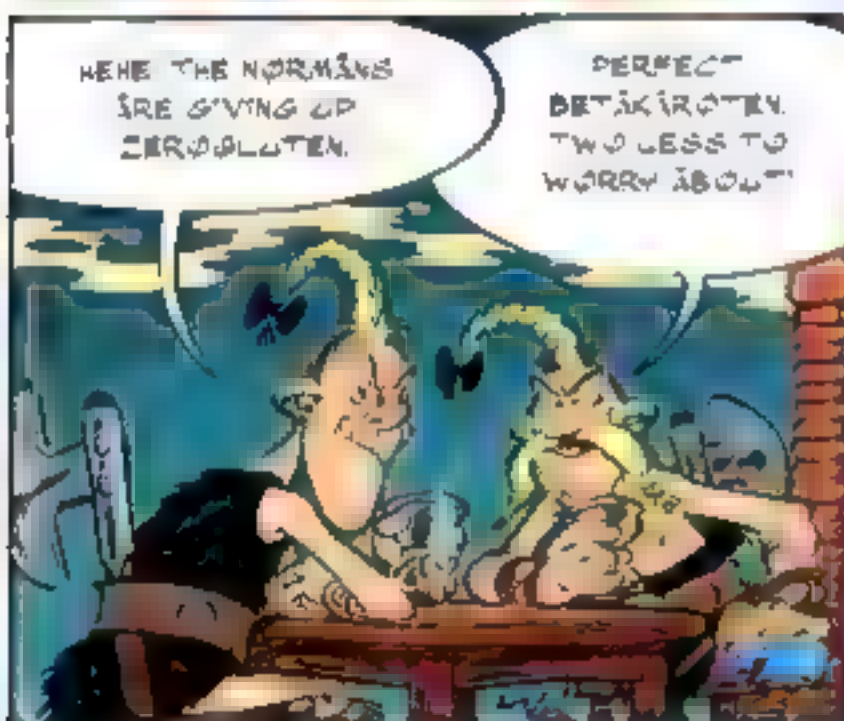
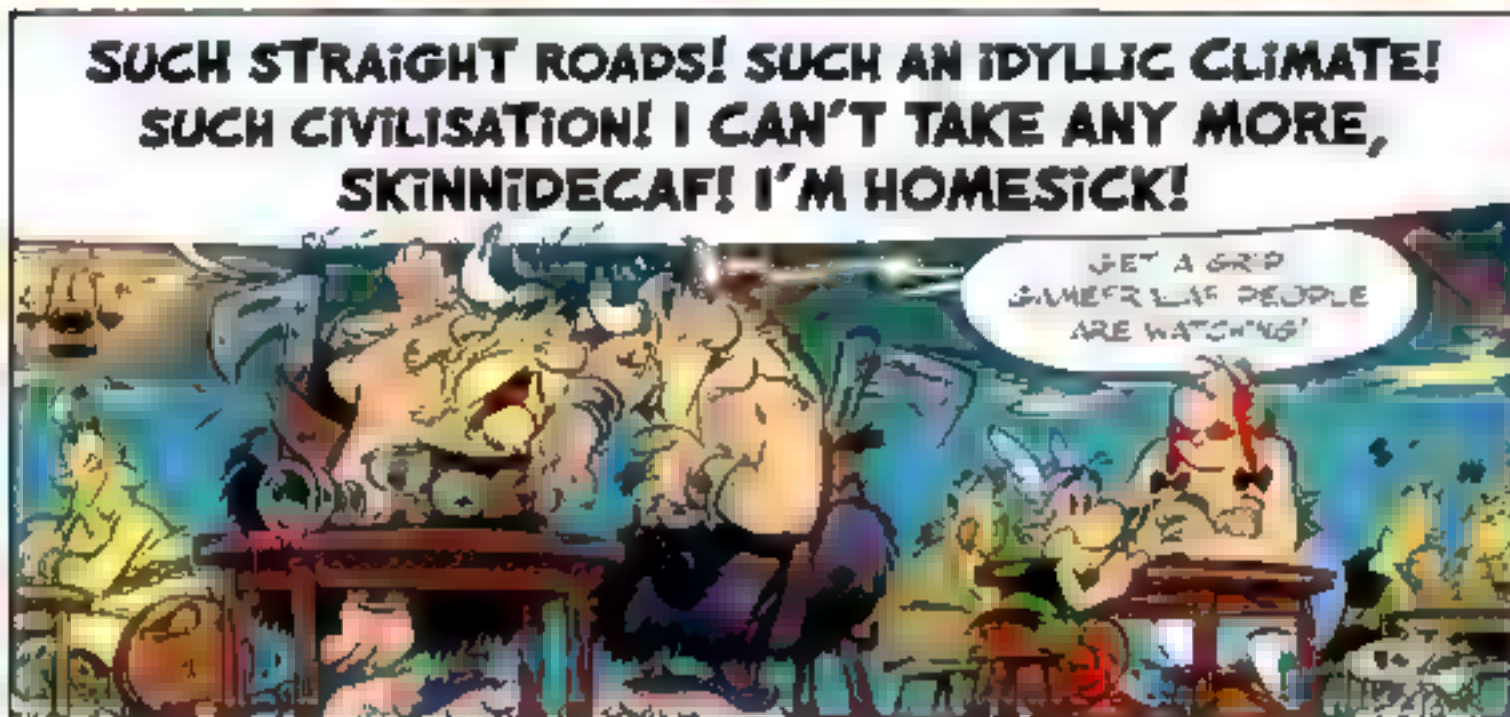
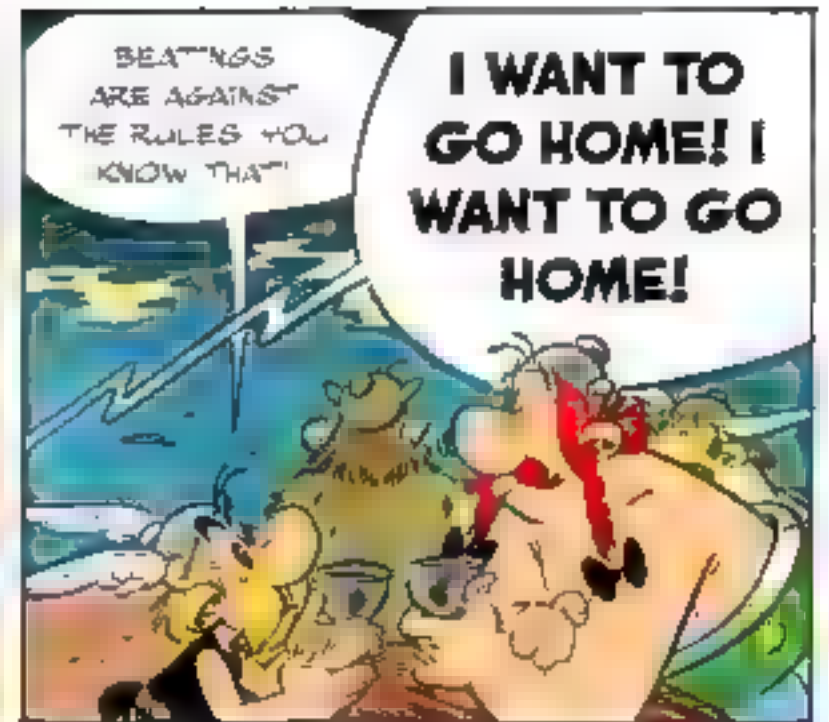
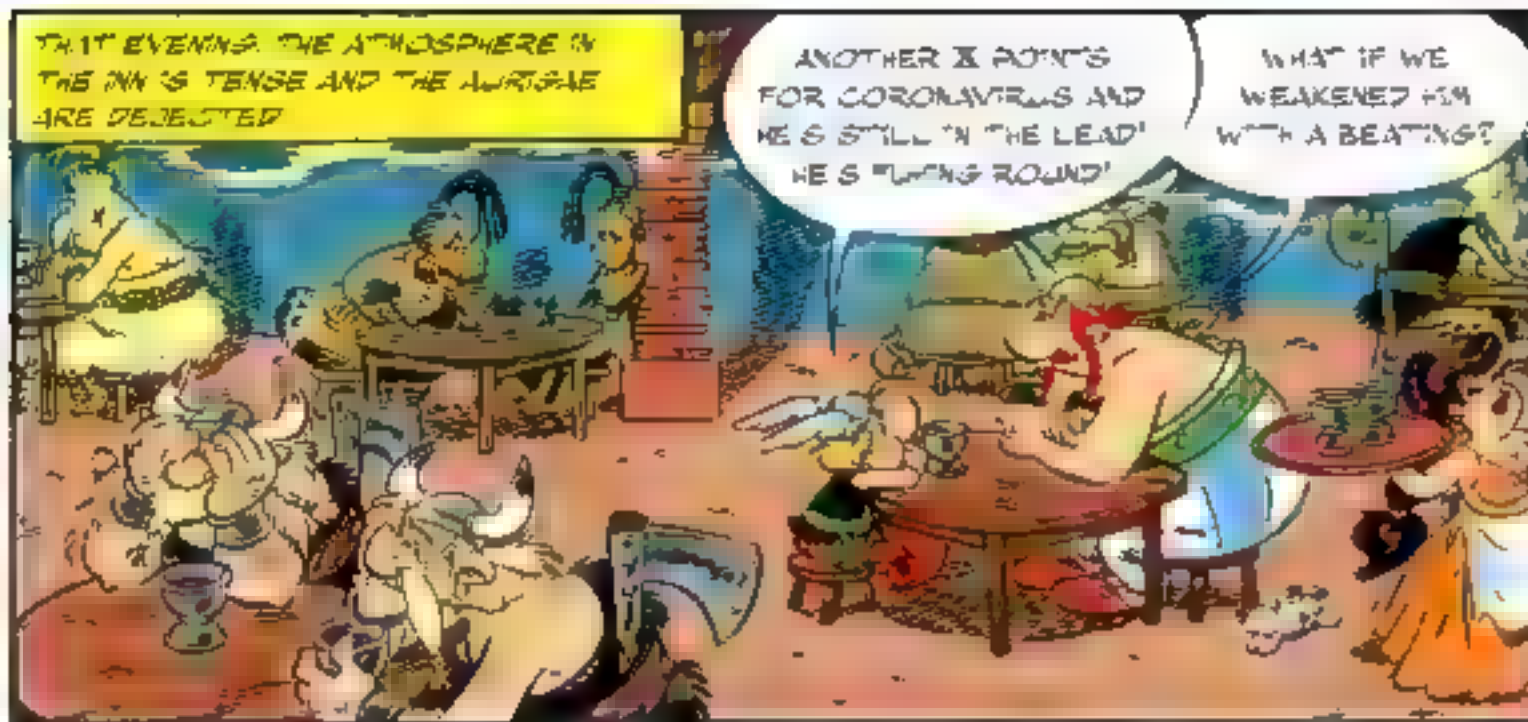












AND HERE ARE THE PASTAE. MY GAWLISH FRIENDS.
IT'S FROM THE EAST THINLY SLICED DOUGH
COOKED IN CREAM. EVEN IN ROME THEY DON'T
MAKE IT THIS GOOD



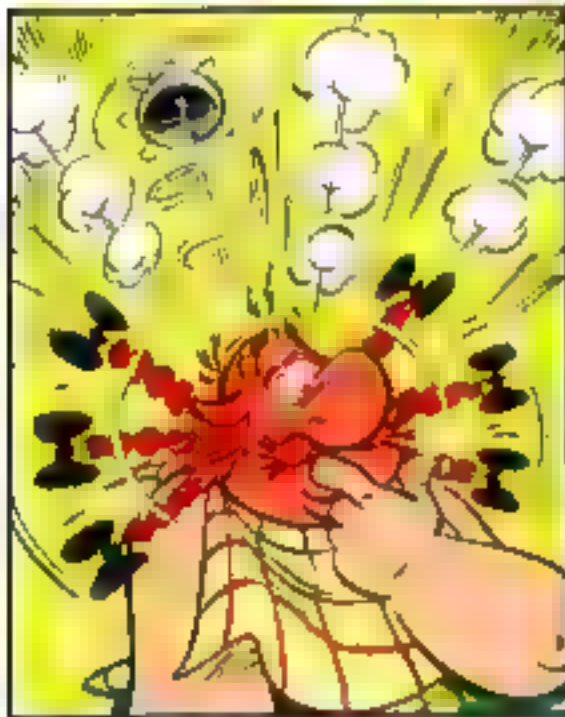
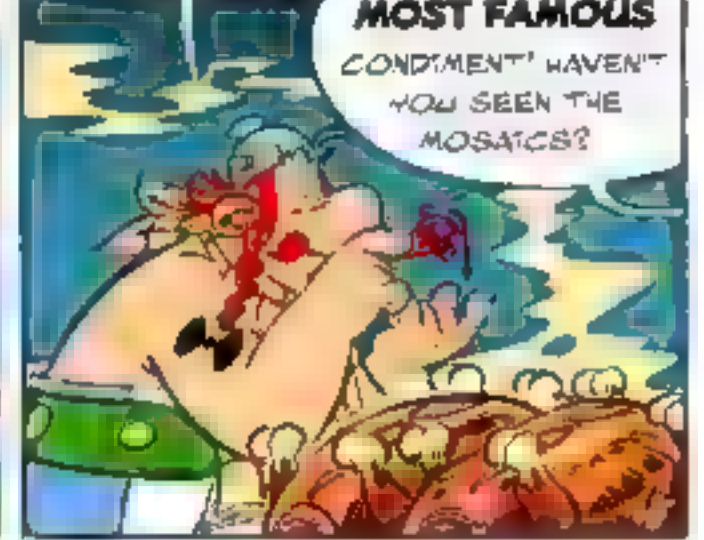
YOU SLICE
EVERYTHING
THINLY HERE!

AND TO SEASON IT AN
AMPHORETTA OF GARUM FROM
OUR SPONSOR, LUPUS.



WHAT EXACTLY IS THIS
GARUM EVERYONE IS
TALKING ABOUT?

ONLY THE
MOST FAMOUS
CONDIMENT! HAVEN'T
YOU SEEN THE
MOSAICS?



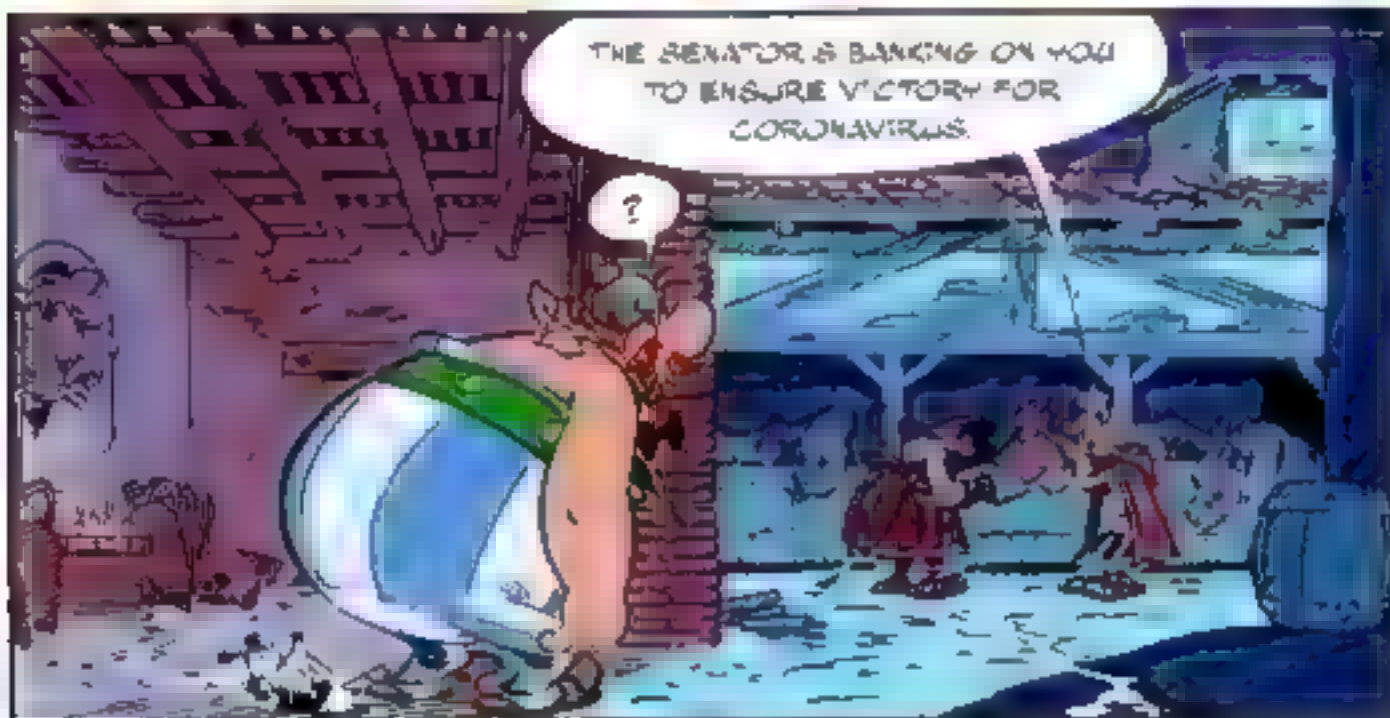
ON THE RIGHT BEFORE THE
VESTIBULUM PAST THE
ATRIUM



HERE,
BACILLUS! THAT'S
THE ADVANCE WE
AGREED

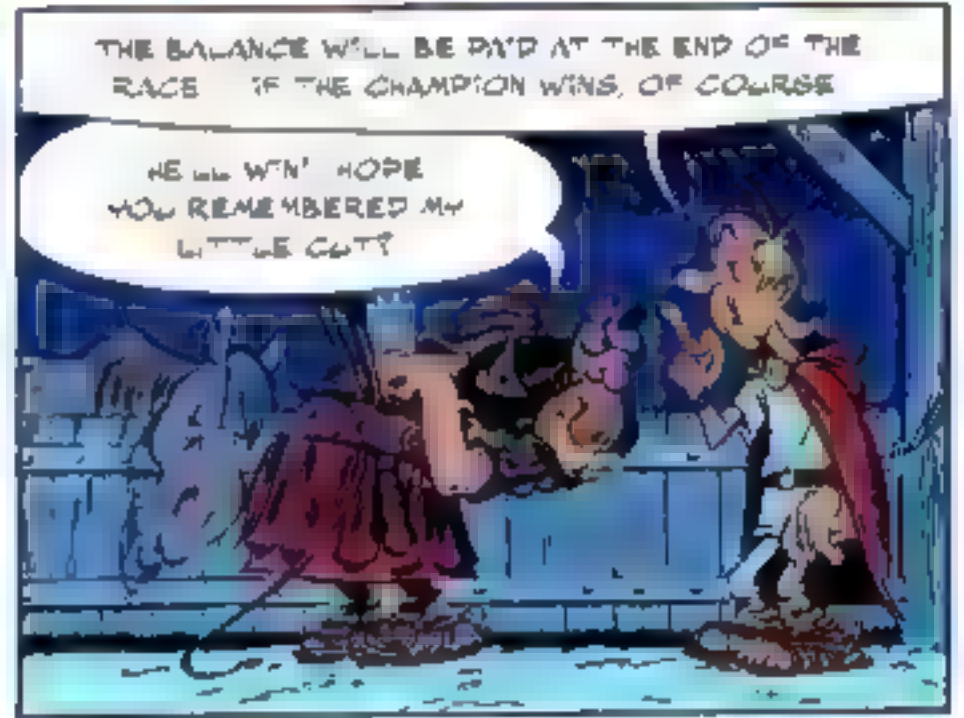


THE SENATOR IS BANKING ON YOU
TO ENSURE VICTORY FOR
CORONAVIRUS.

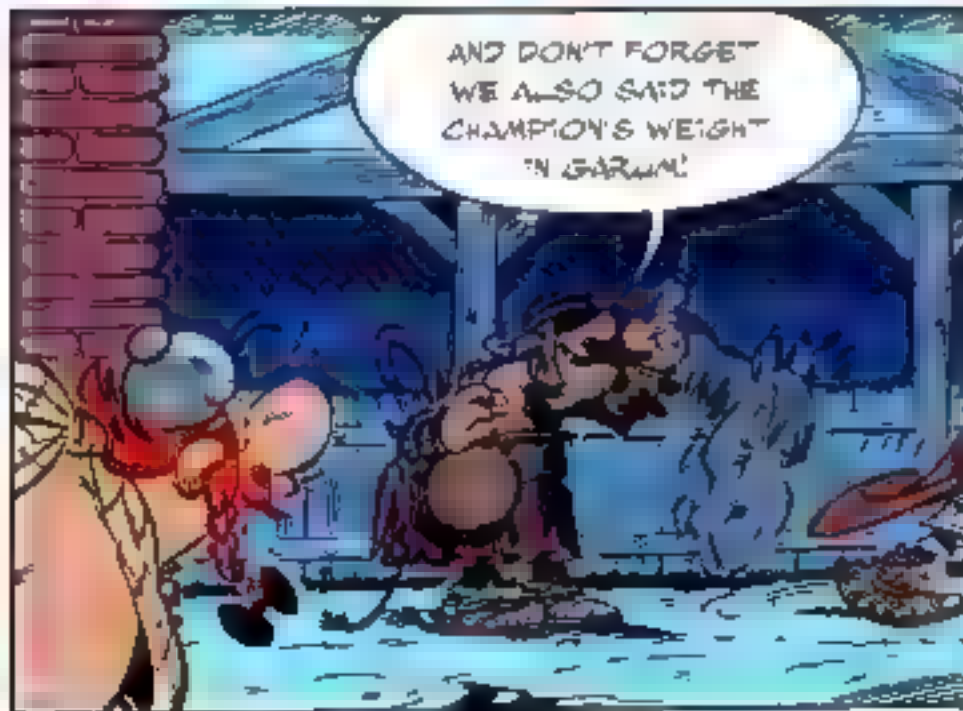


THE BALANCE WILL BE PAID AT THE END OF THE
RACE IF THE CHAMPION WINS, OF COURSE

HE'LL WIN! HOPE
YOU REMEMBERED MY
LITTLE CUT?



AND DON'T FORGET
WE ALSO SAID THE
CHAMPION'S WEIGHT
IN GARUM!

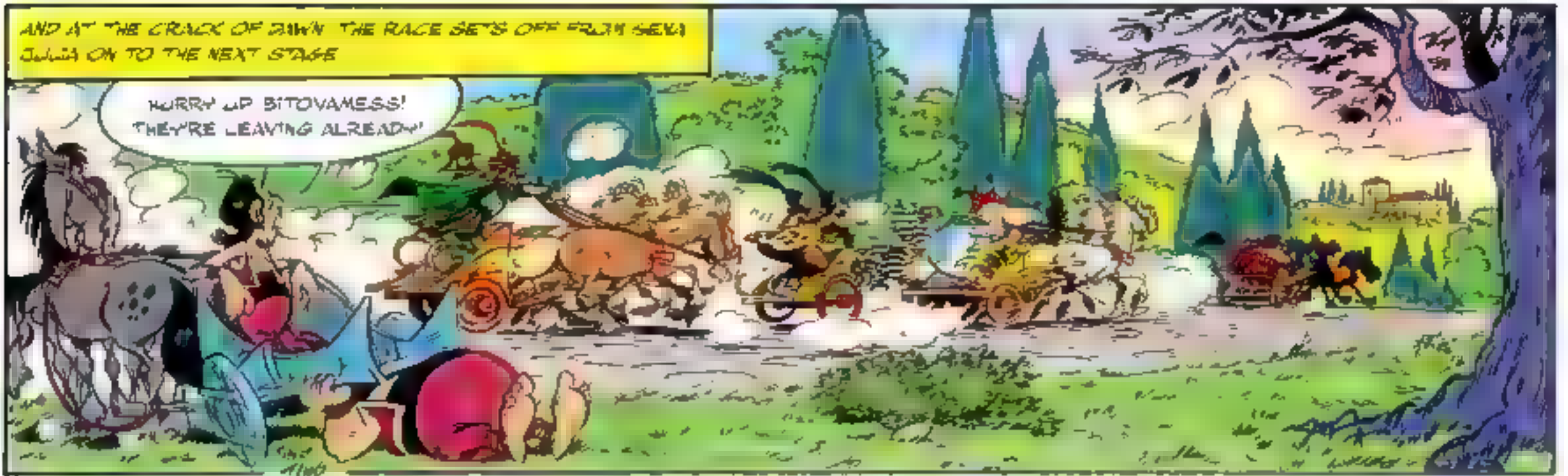


I'D PREFER MY OWN
WEIGHT IN WILD BOAR IF
THAT'S POSSIBLE



AND AT THE CRACK OF DAWN THE RACE SETS OFF FROM SEVI JULIA ON TO THE NEXT STAGE

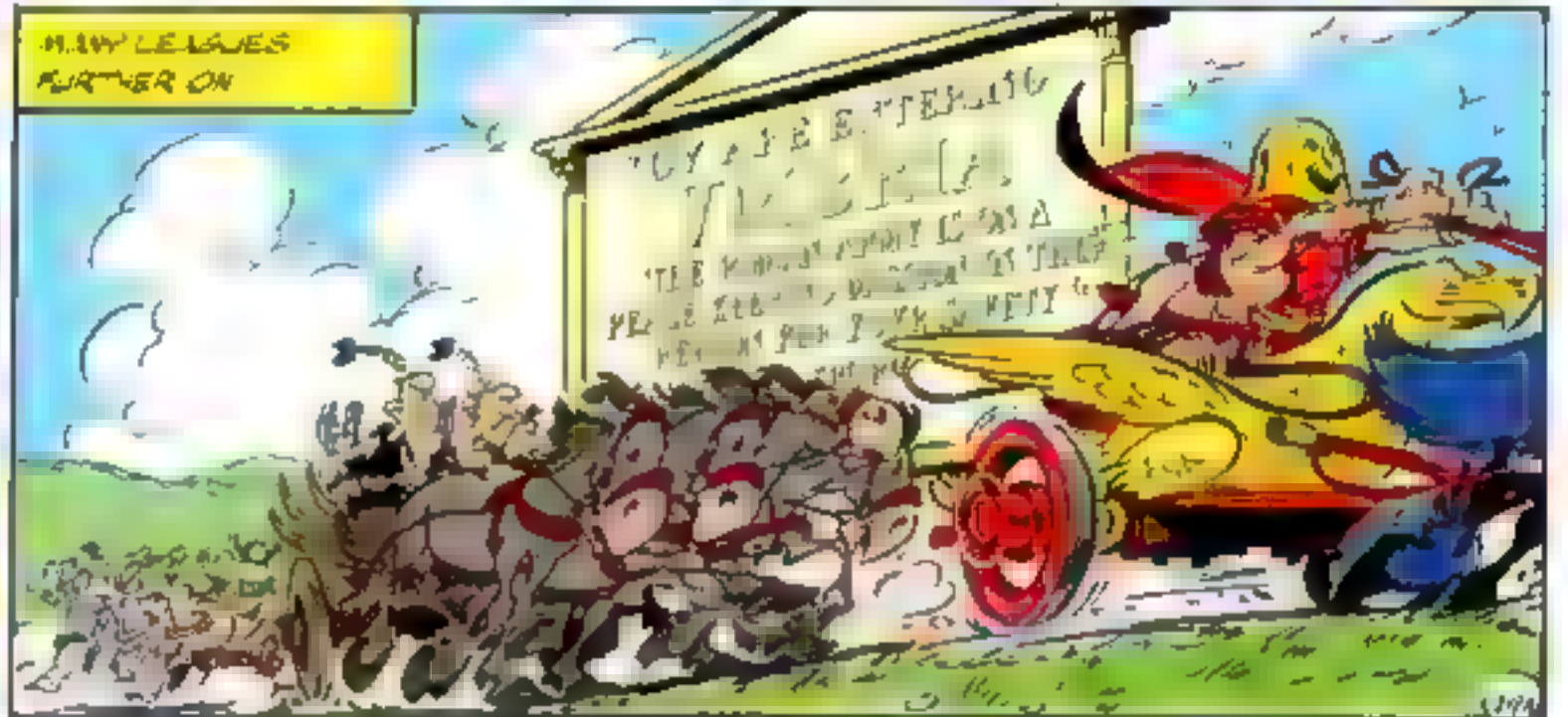
HURRY UP BITOVAMESS!
THEY'RE LEAVING ALREADY!



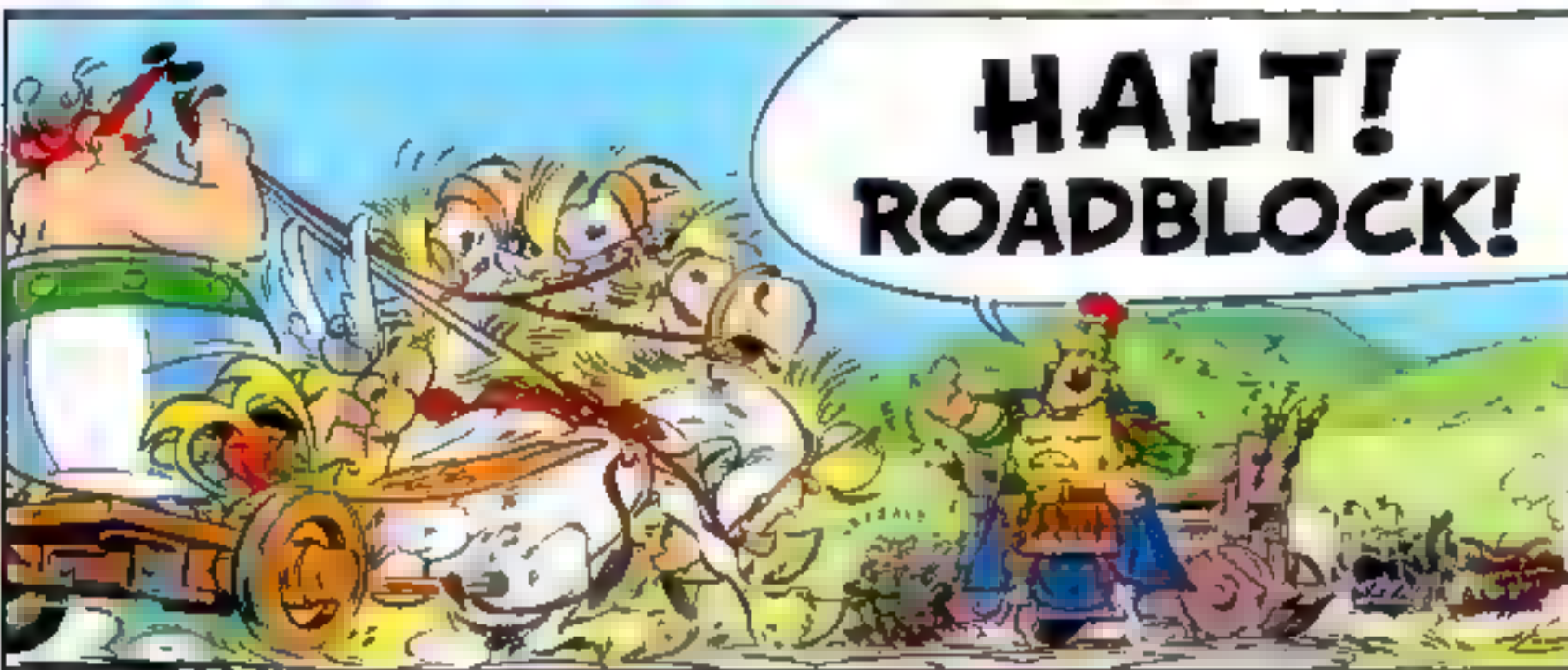
WE'RE GOING
TO TIBUR!
NEAR ROME IN
LATIUM VIA
UMBERIA.

ERM, SAY THAT
AGAIN!

HOW LEAVES
FURTHER ON



**HALT!
ROADBLOCK!**



WE'RE ON MAXIMA ALERT! WE
HAVE TO CHECK NO UMBRIAN
REBELS HAVE STOWED AWAY
WITH YOU.



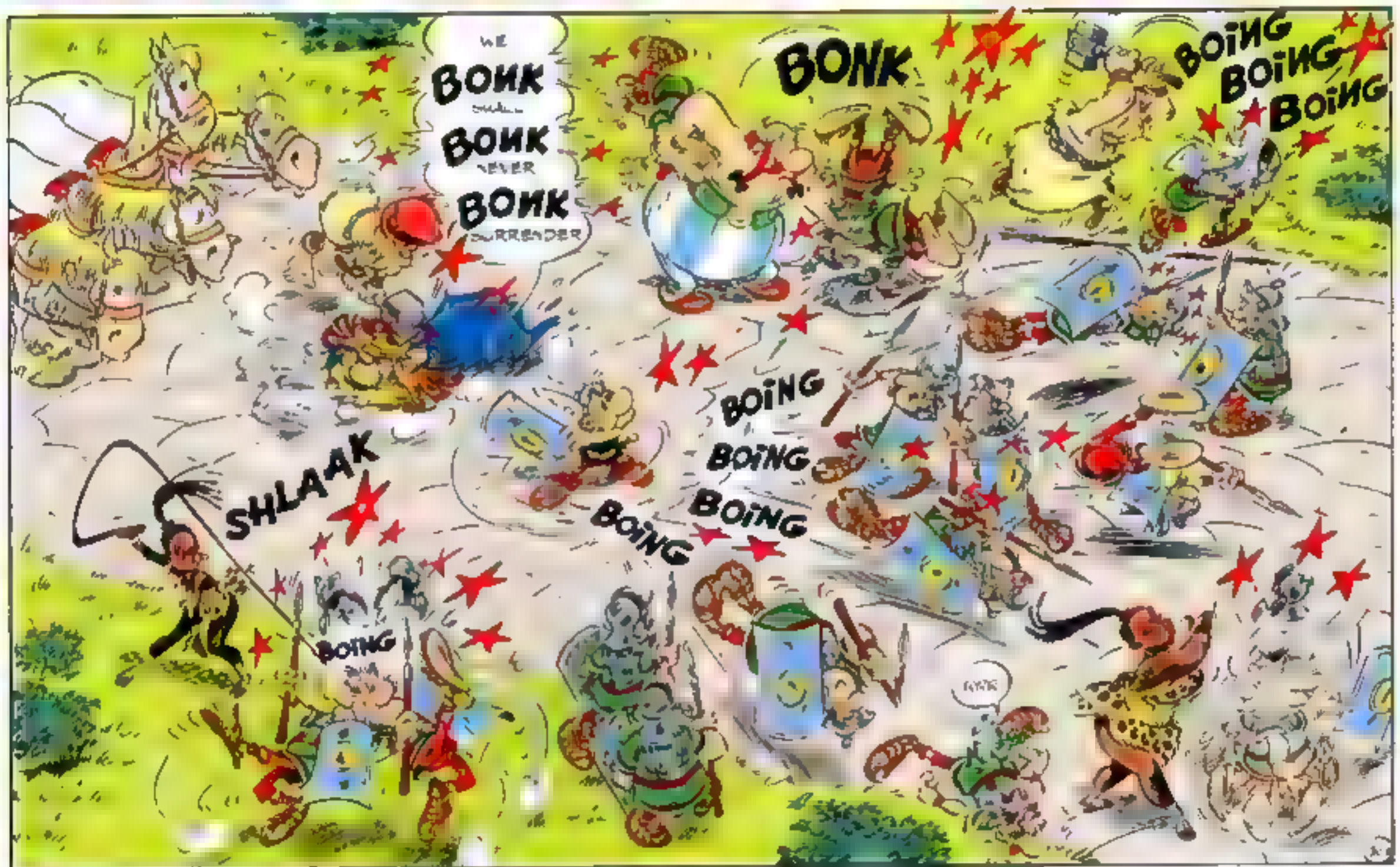
NOW THAT YOU'VE LET YOUR
OWN CHAMPION THROUGH?
ARE YOU HAVING A LAUGH
ROMANS?

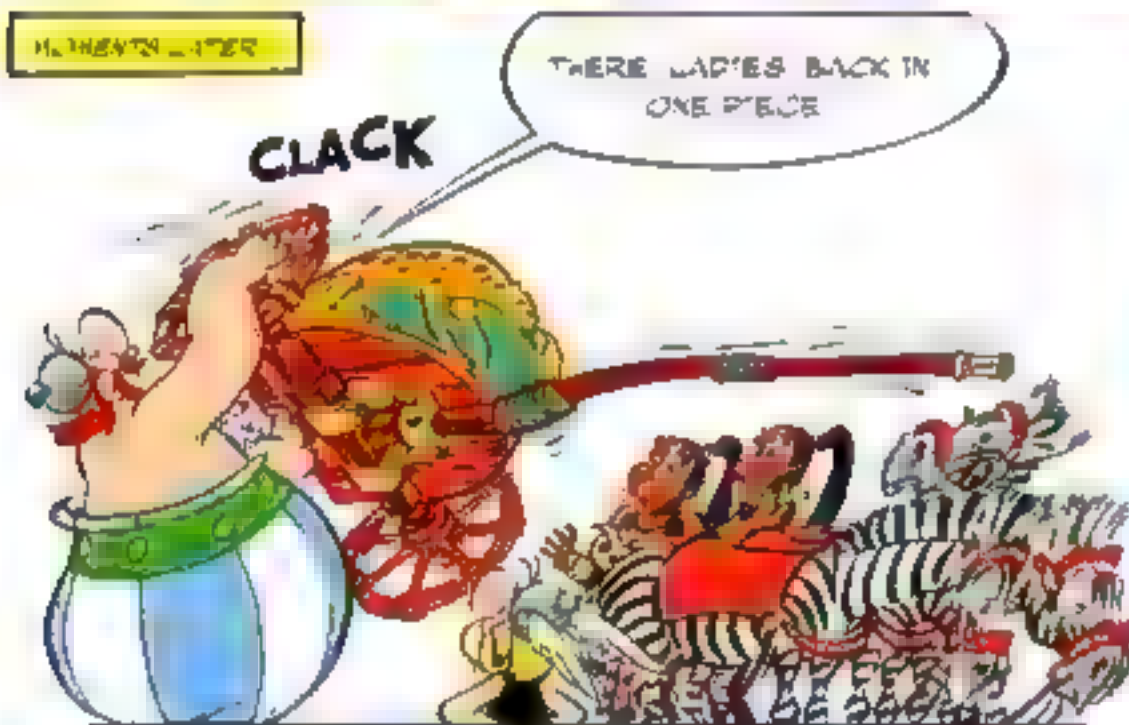
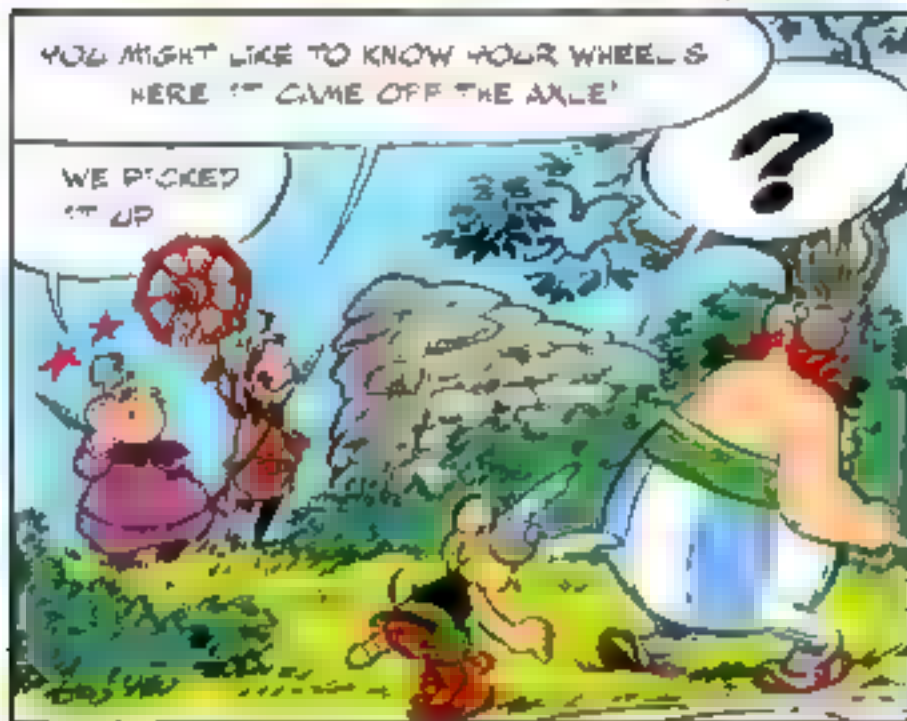
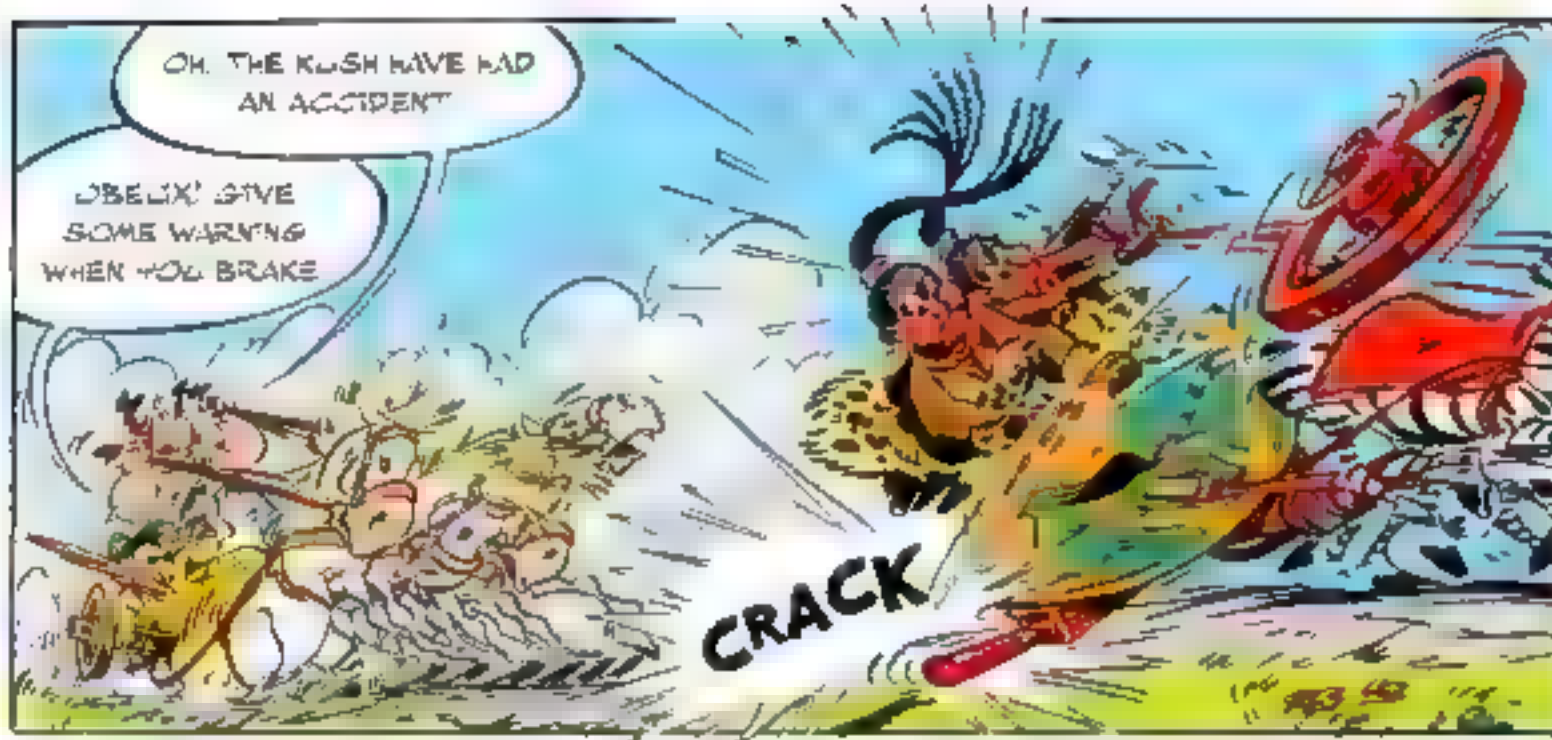
LOOM REAL
ROMANS LIKE THE
ONES IN GALL

WHO DARES HINDER THE
GLORIOUS PROGRESS OF
THE SAMARITANS?

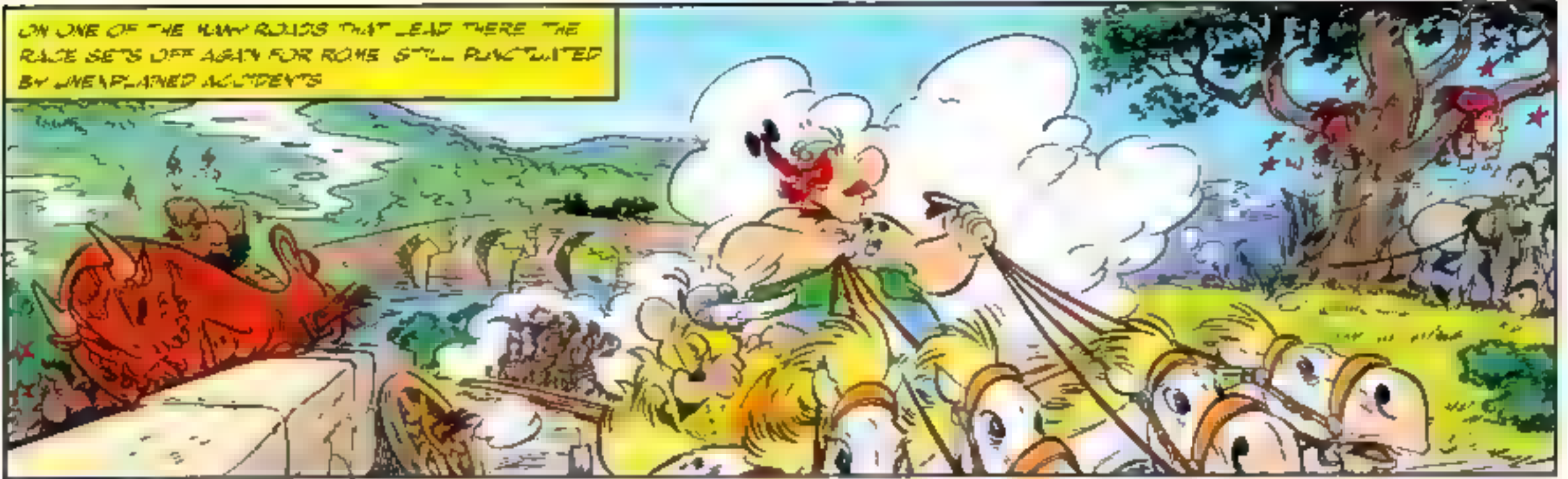
NO ARGUING! RACE OR NOT,
EVERYONE'S STOPPED
AND CHECKED!







ON ONE OF THE MANY ROADS THAT LEAD THERE THE RACE SETS OFF AGAIN FOR ROME STILL PUNCTUATED BY UNEXPLAINED ACCIDENTS



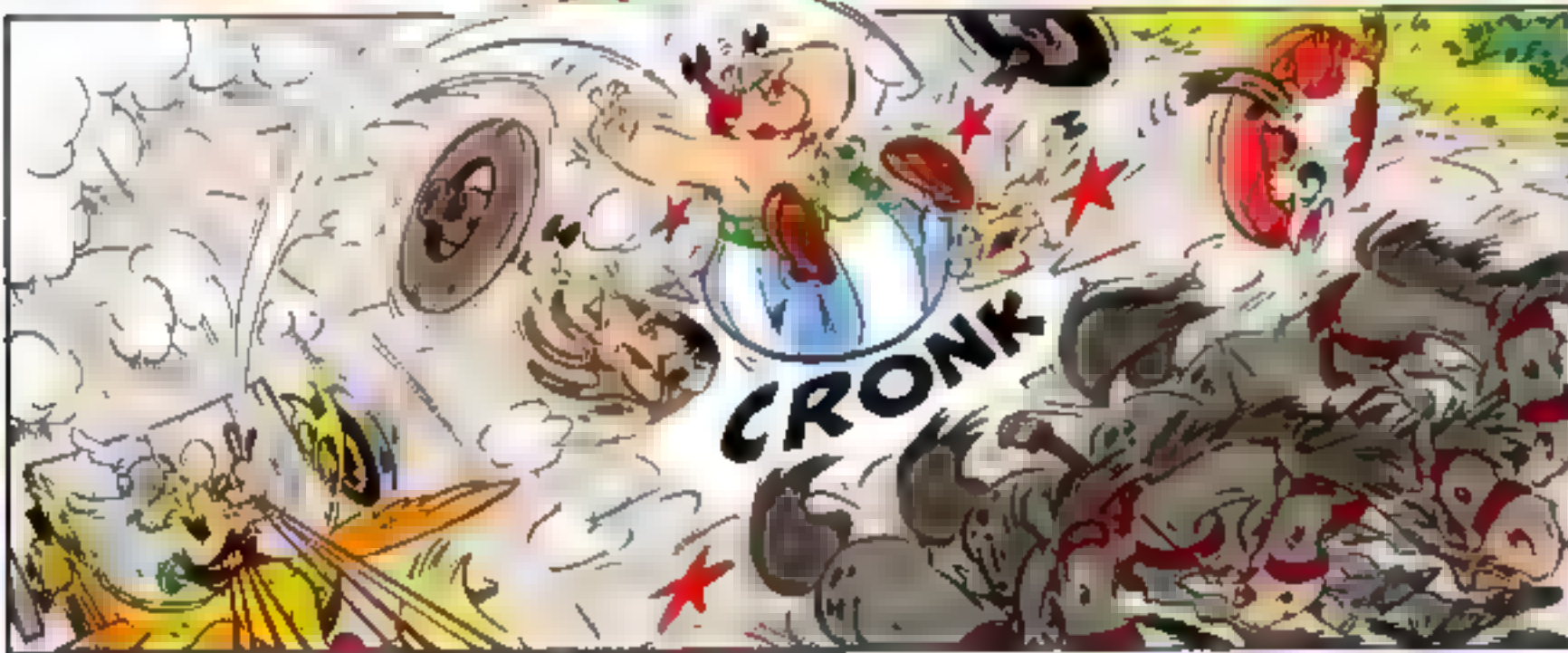
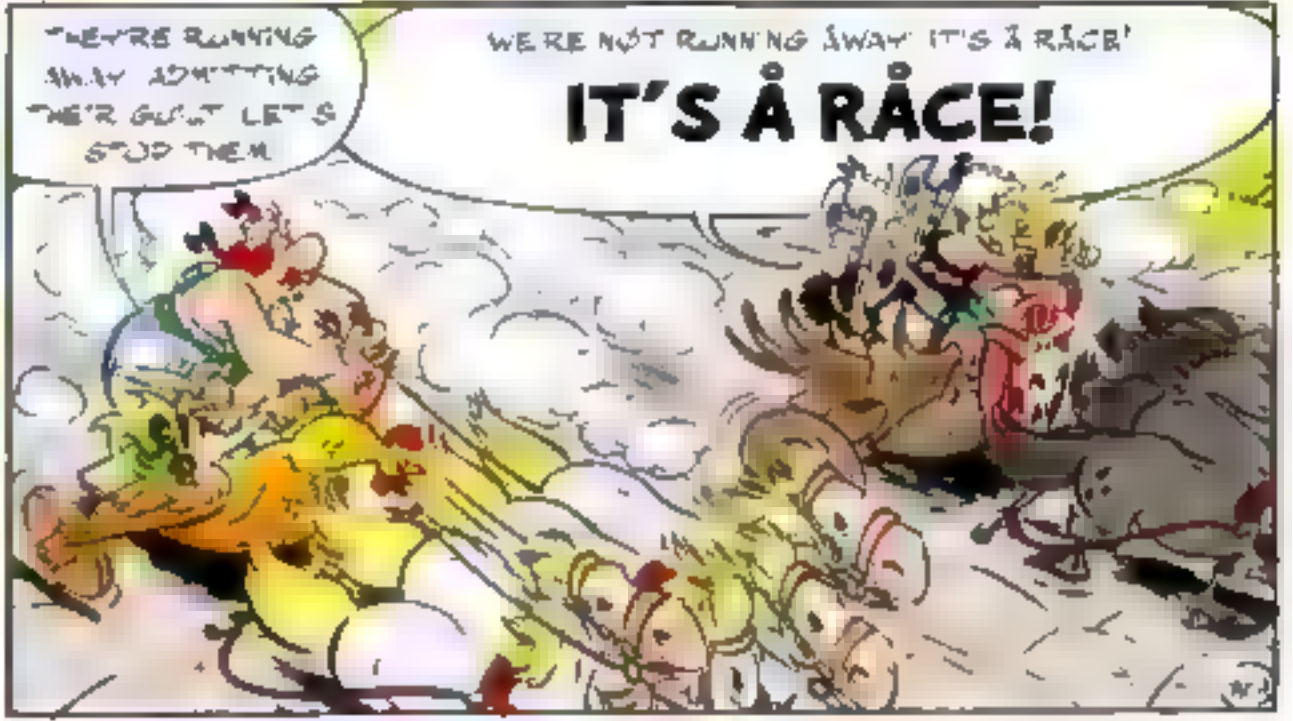
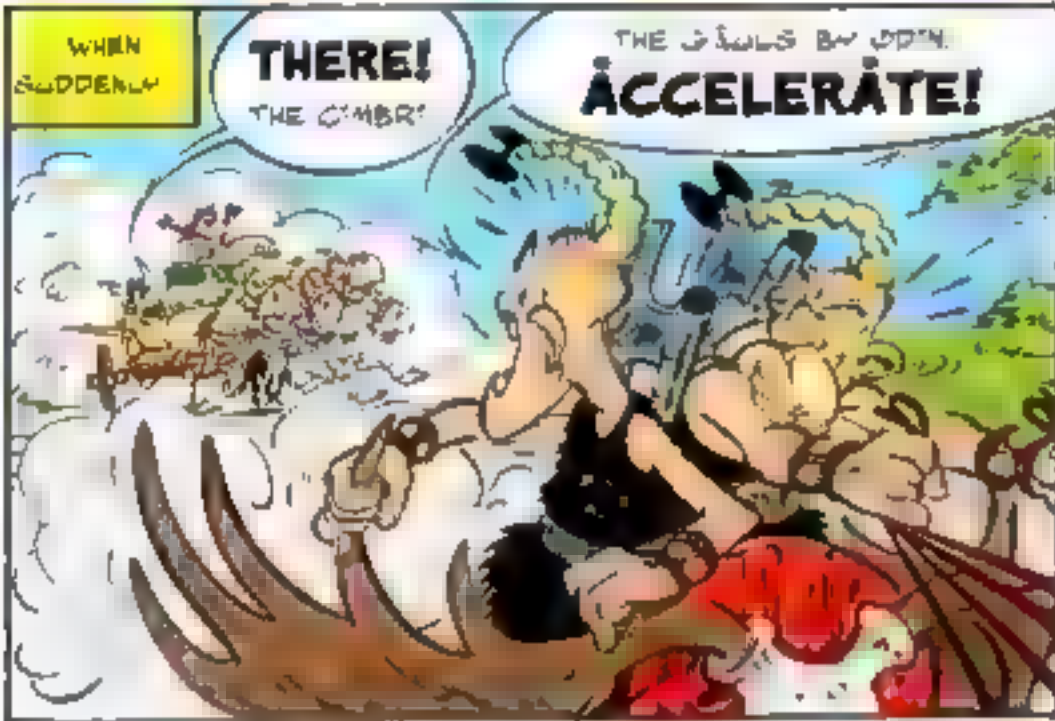
WHEN
SUDDENLY

THERE!
THE CIMBRI!

THE GIULS BY ODIN
ACCELERATE!

THEY'RE RUNNING
AWAY ADMITTING
THEIR GUILT LET'S
STOP THEM

WE'RE NOT RUNNING AWAY IT'S A RACE!
IT'S Å RÅCE!



HAVE MERCY! WE'RE
JUST SENATOR
BROTHERS LOWLY
SLAVES WE CIMBRI
CAN'T TAKE
ANY MORE



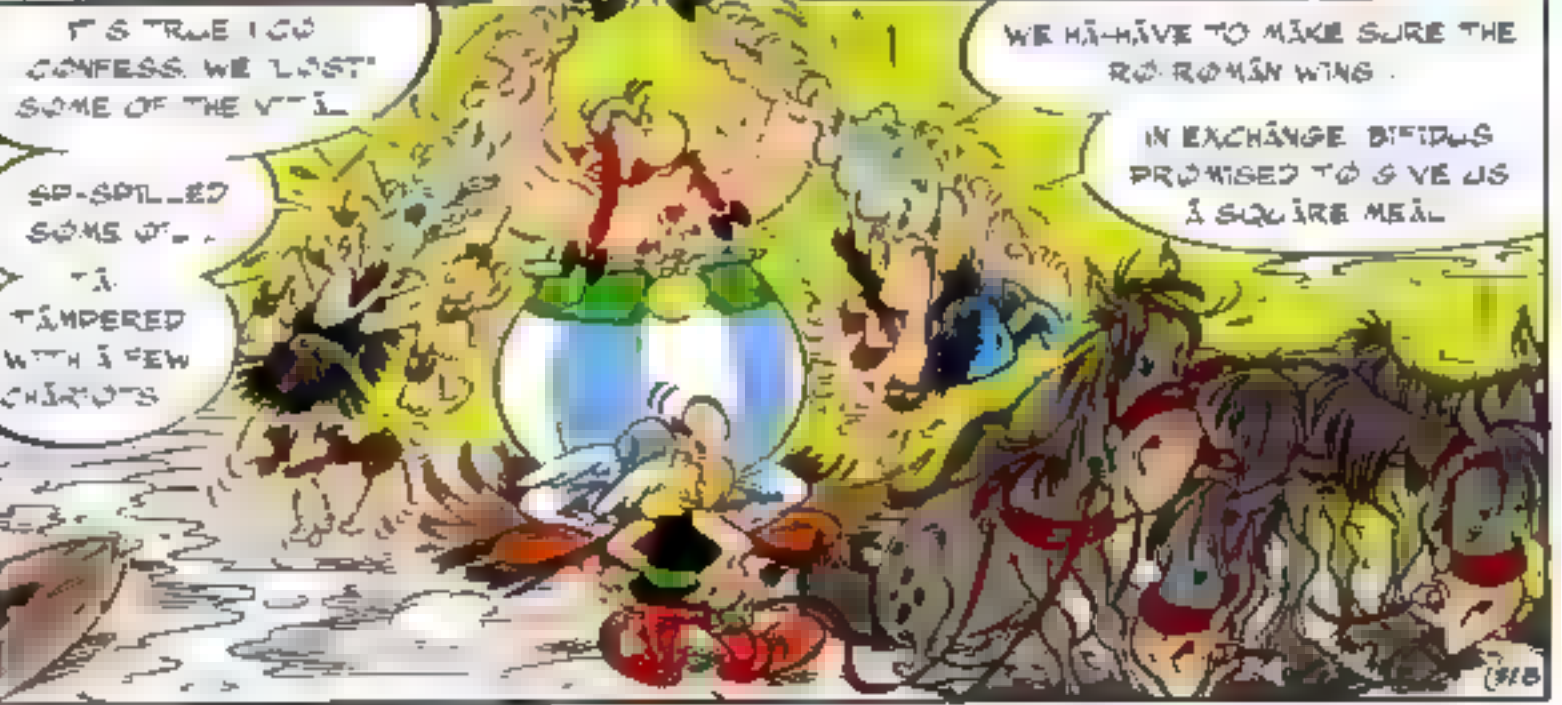
HE WORKS US TO THE BONE & IRVES US IN
TORTURES US WITH MORSELS OF PASTA IN
ALL DIFFERENT SHAPES - LACES, RIBBONS
TUBES, EVEN BUTTERFLIES!



IT'S TRUE I DO
CONFESS WE LOST
SOME OF THE V.I.

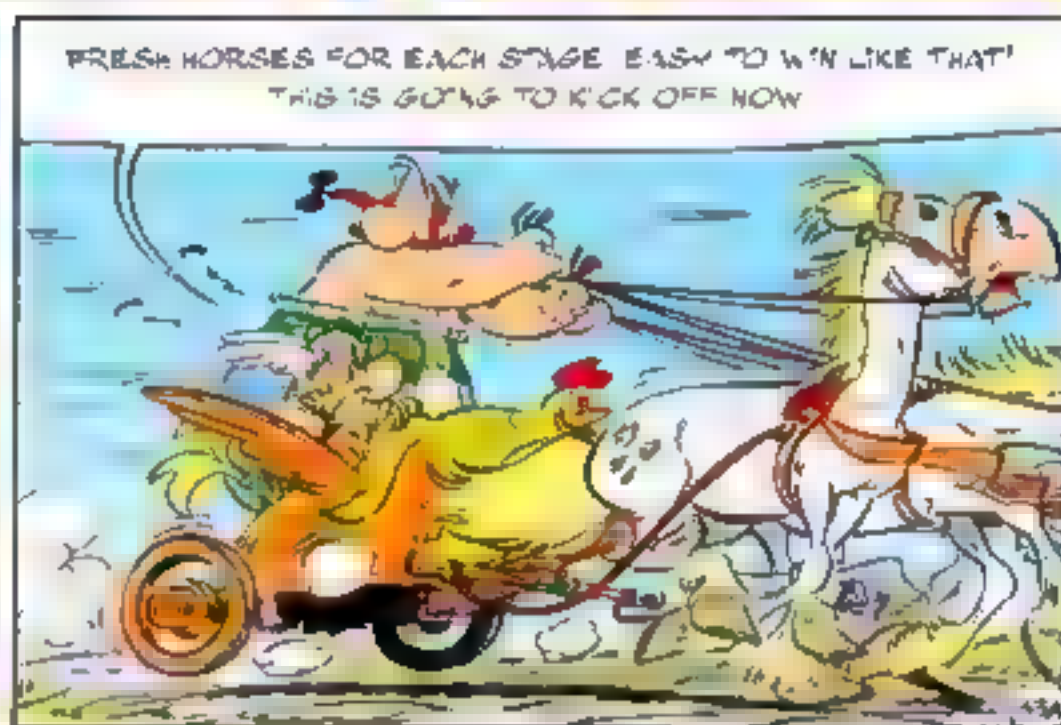
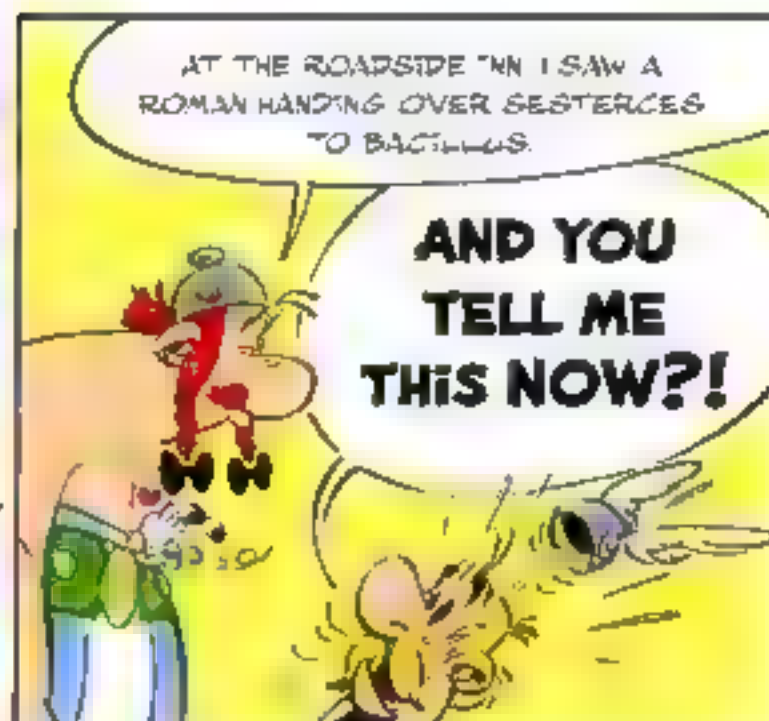
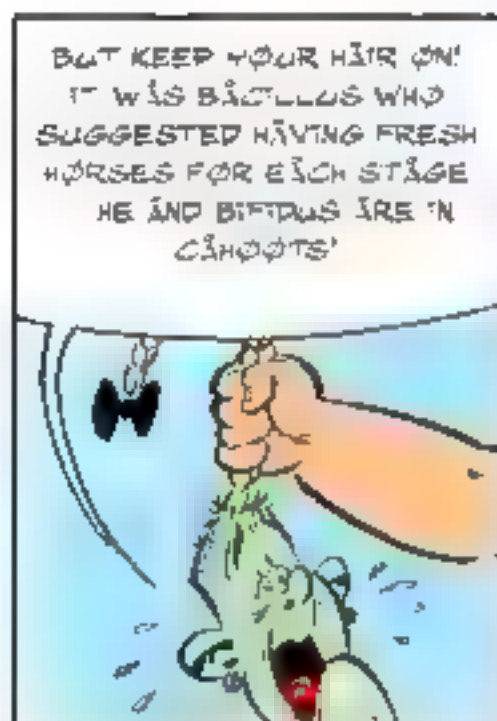
SO-SOILED
SOME OF...

...I
TAMPERED
WITH A FEW
CHIRITS

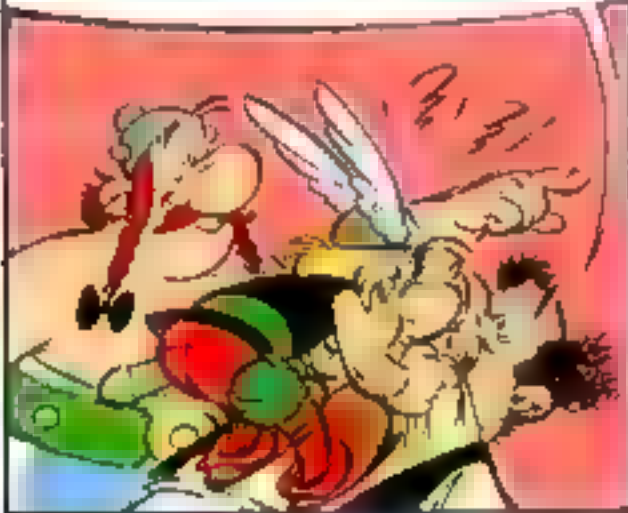


WE HÅ-HÅVE TO MAKE SURE THE
RO ROMAN WING

IN EXCHANGE BIFIDUS
PROMISED TO GIVE US
A SQUIRE MEAL



HE'S A GUEST OF SENATOR BIFIDUS, WHO HAS A SMALL HOLIDAY VILLA NOT FAR FROM HERE!



MY FRIENDS, THIS GLORIOUS RACE HAS MADE ME PERSONA GRATA AT THE SENATE. THANKS TO YOU, I'M BACK TO RUNNING THE SESTERCES FOR THE ROMAN ROADS AS I SEE FIT

AND DE FACTO TO FUNDING YOUR OWN LIFESTYLE

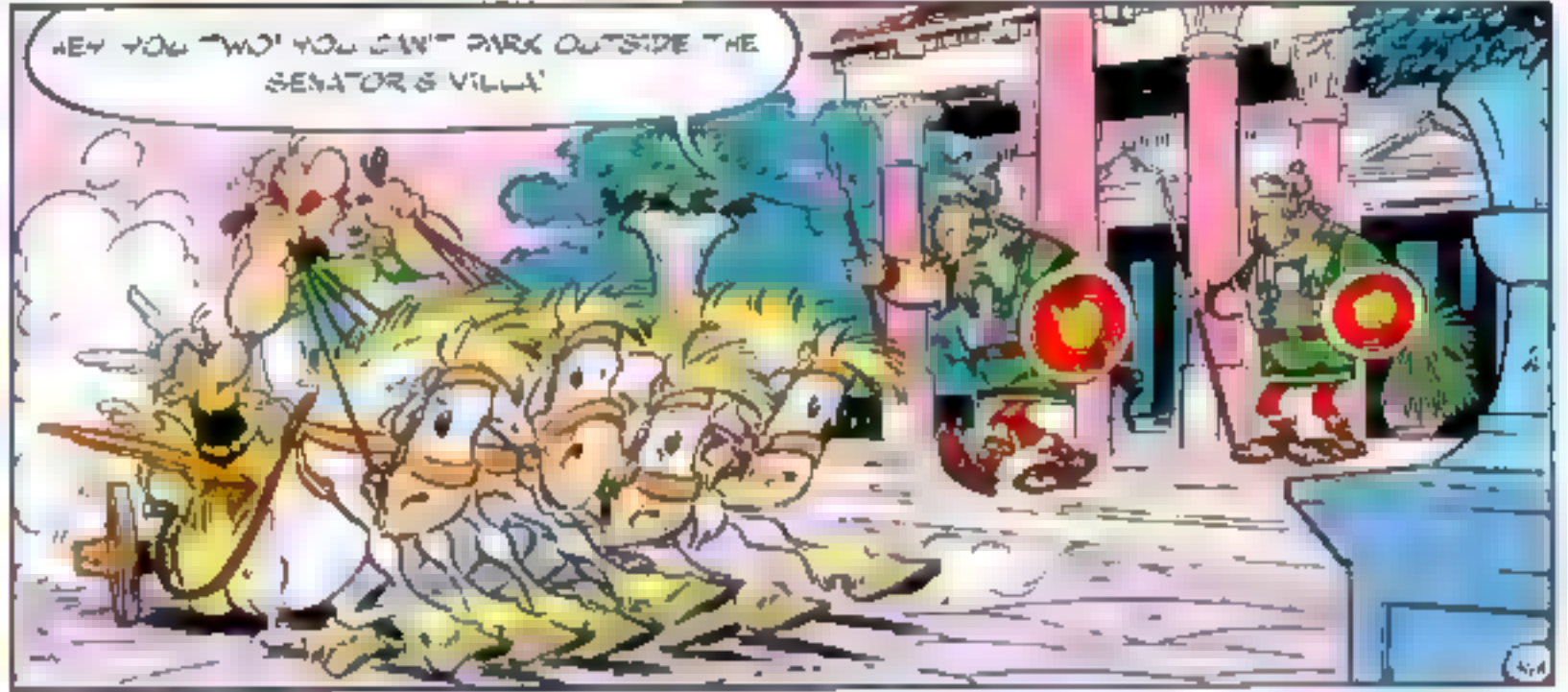


LACTUS, THE ORGY'S READY

JUST COMING, MUZZ WELLS



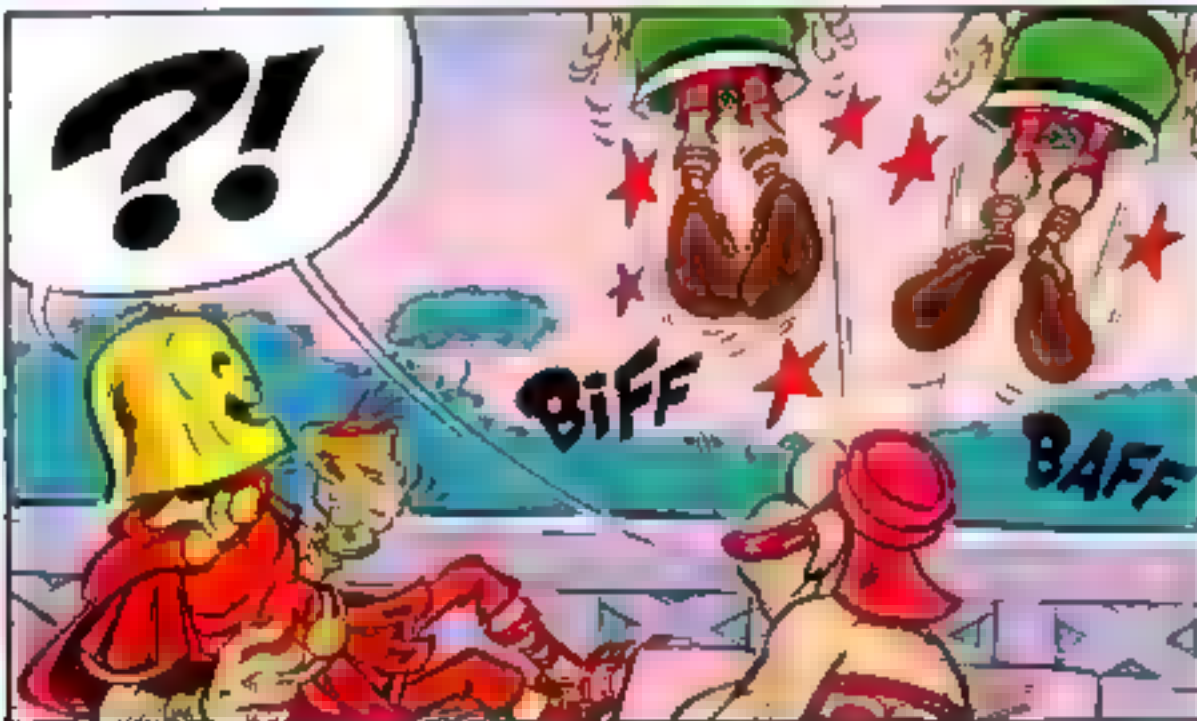
HEY YOU TWO! YOU CAN'T PARK OUTSIDE THE SENATOR'S VILLA!



?!

BIFF

BAFF



LACTUS DID YOU INVITE ANY GIRLS TO THE ORGY?

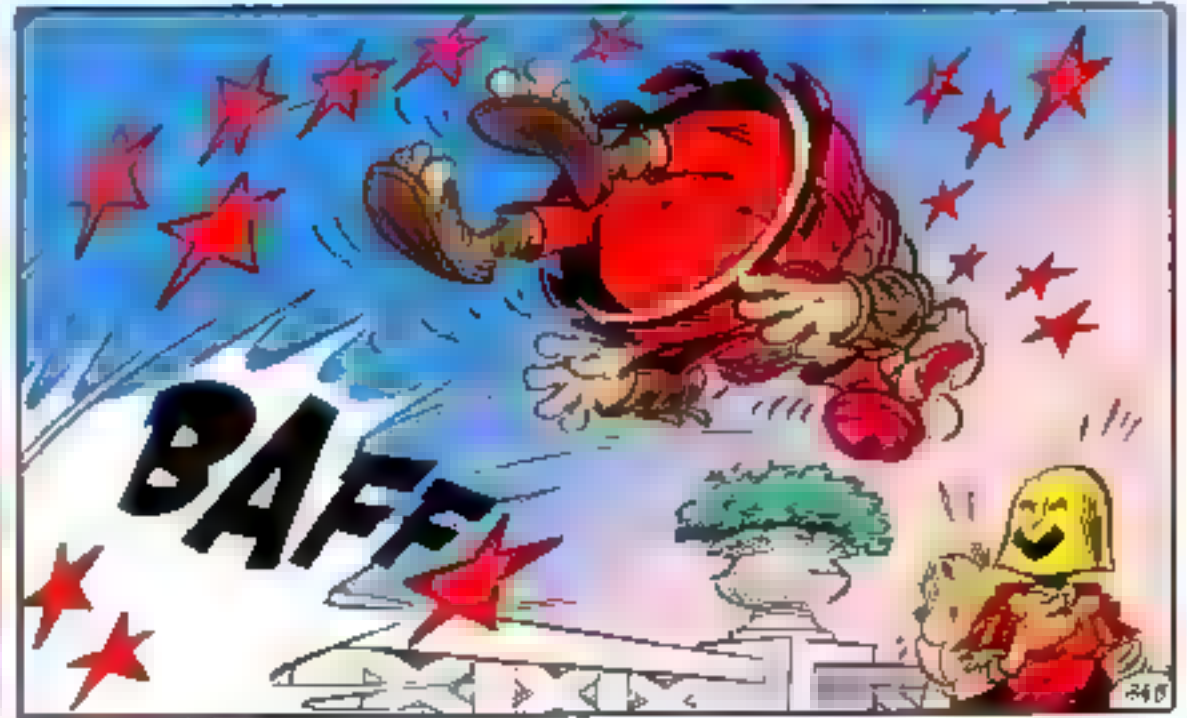
BAFF

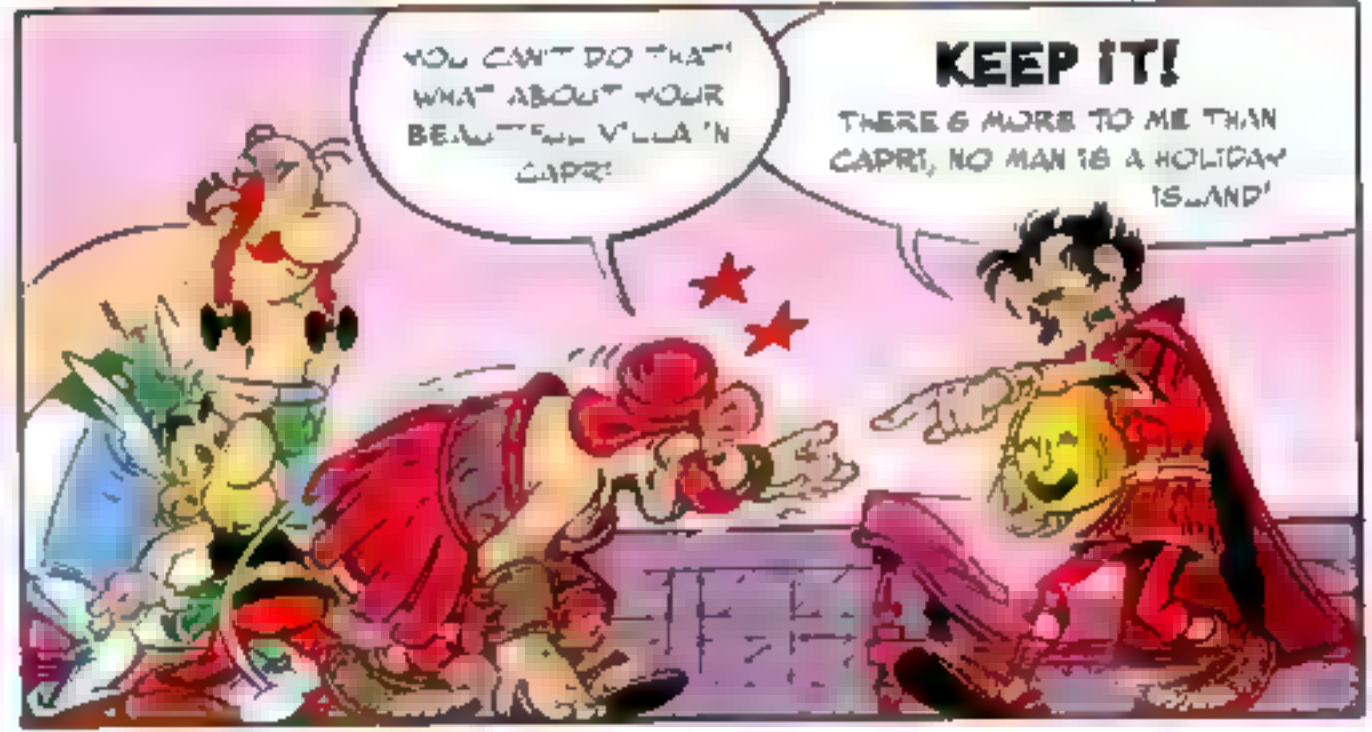
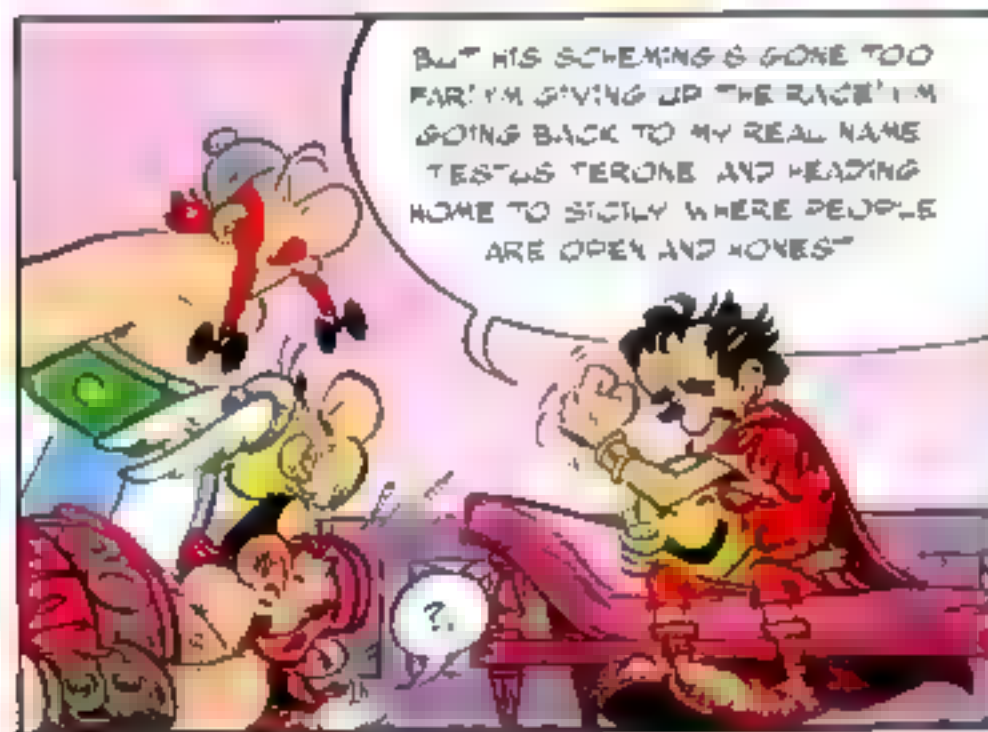
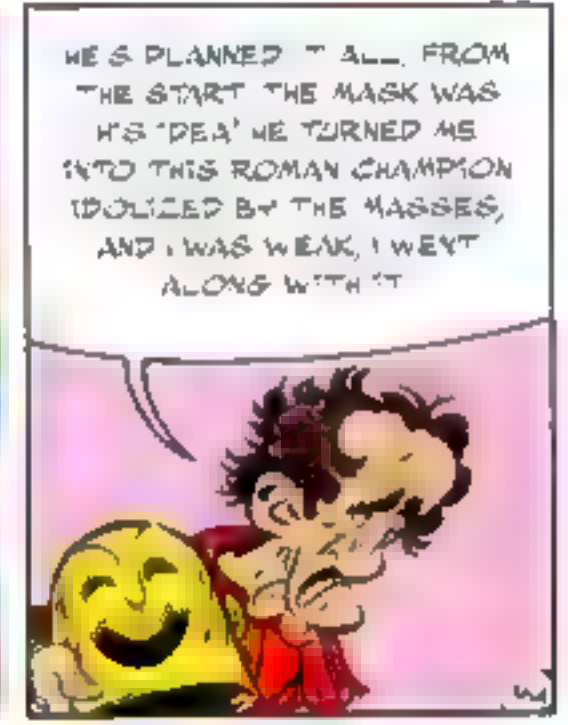
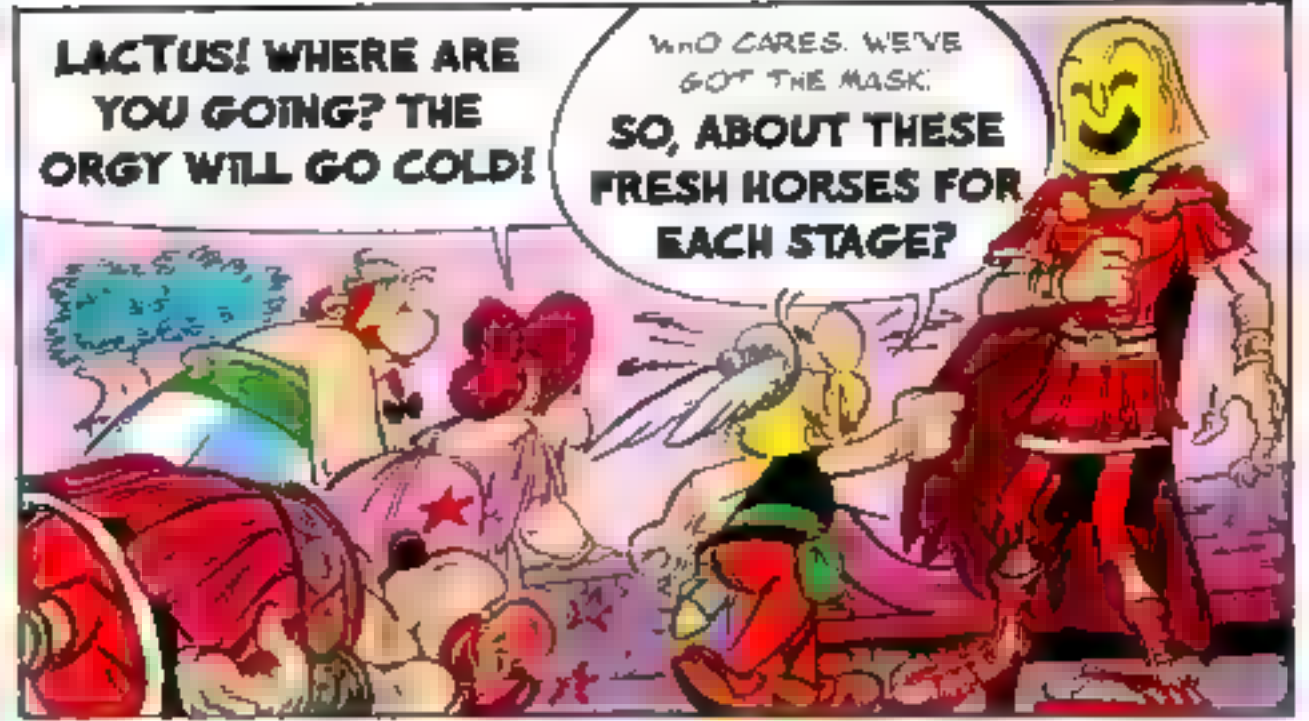


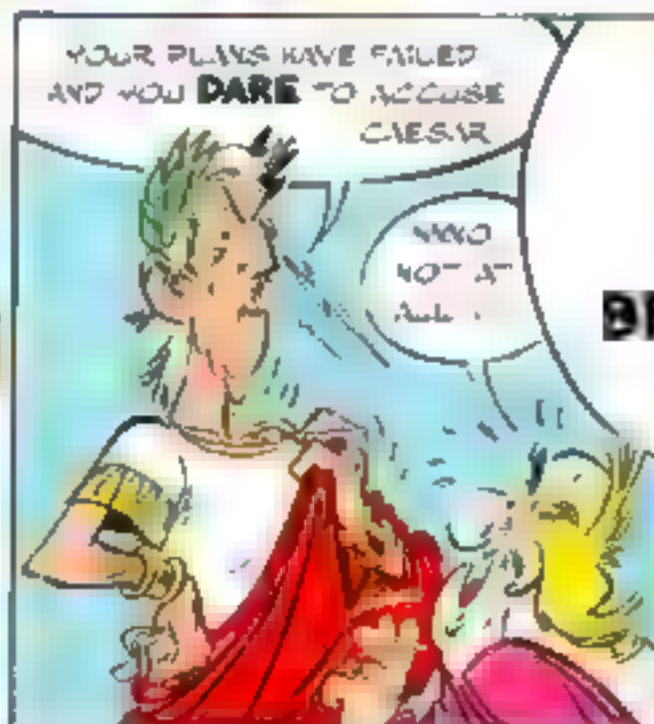
WAIT I'LL BE BACK! WE WOULDN'T WANT THEM TO HAVE A WASTED JOURNEY



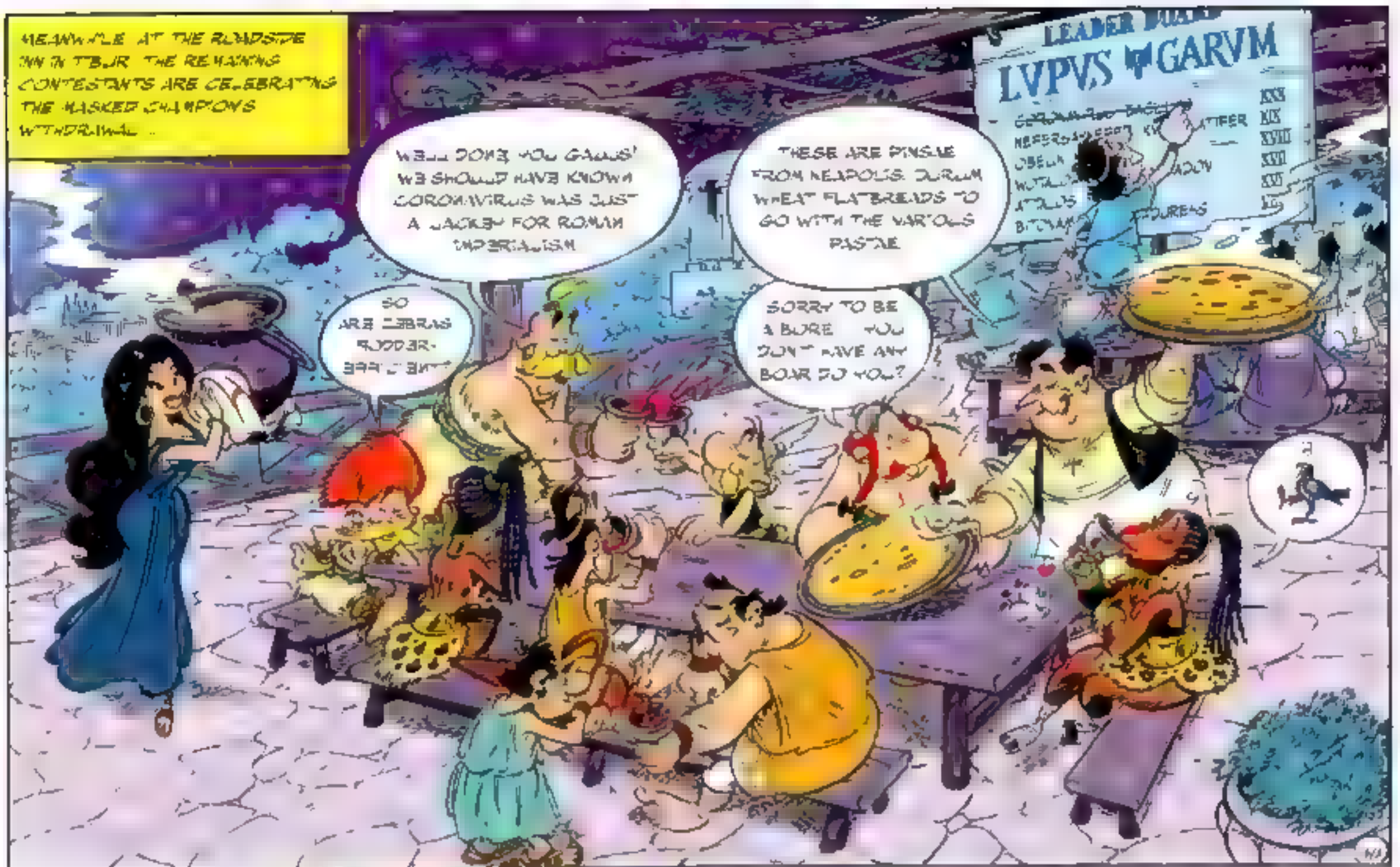
BAFF







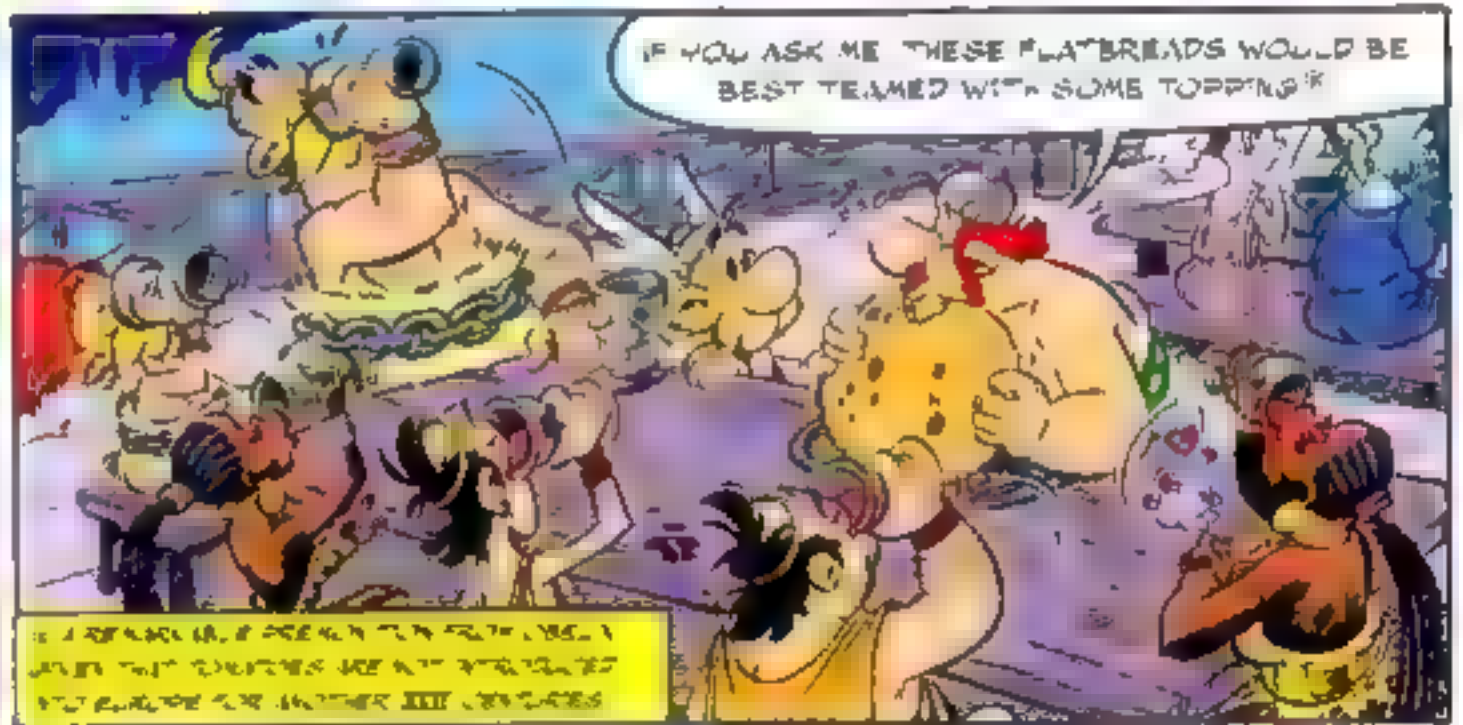
MEANWHILE AT THE ROADSIDE INN IN TBJR THE REMAINING CONTESTANTS ARE CELEBRATING THE MASKED CHAMPIONS WITHDRAWAL...



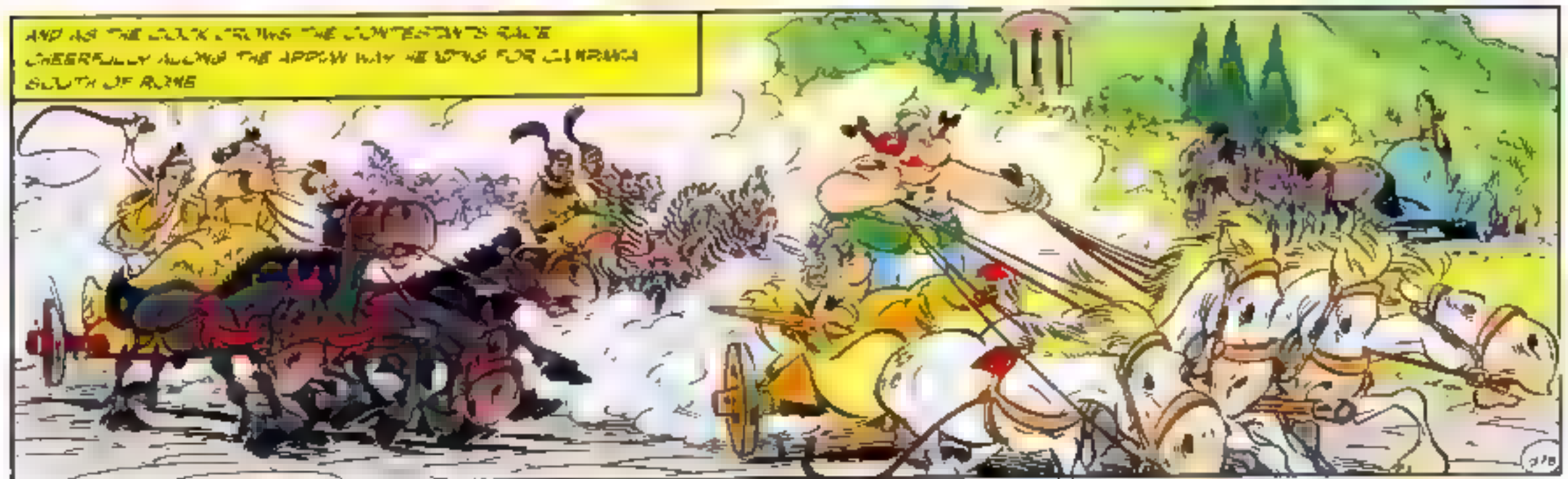
AURIGAE!
LET'S
CONTINUE
THE RACE
ON FAIR
TERMS! MAY
THE BEST
TEAM
WIN!

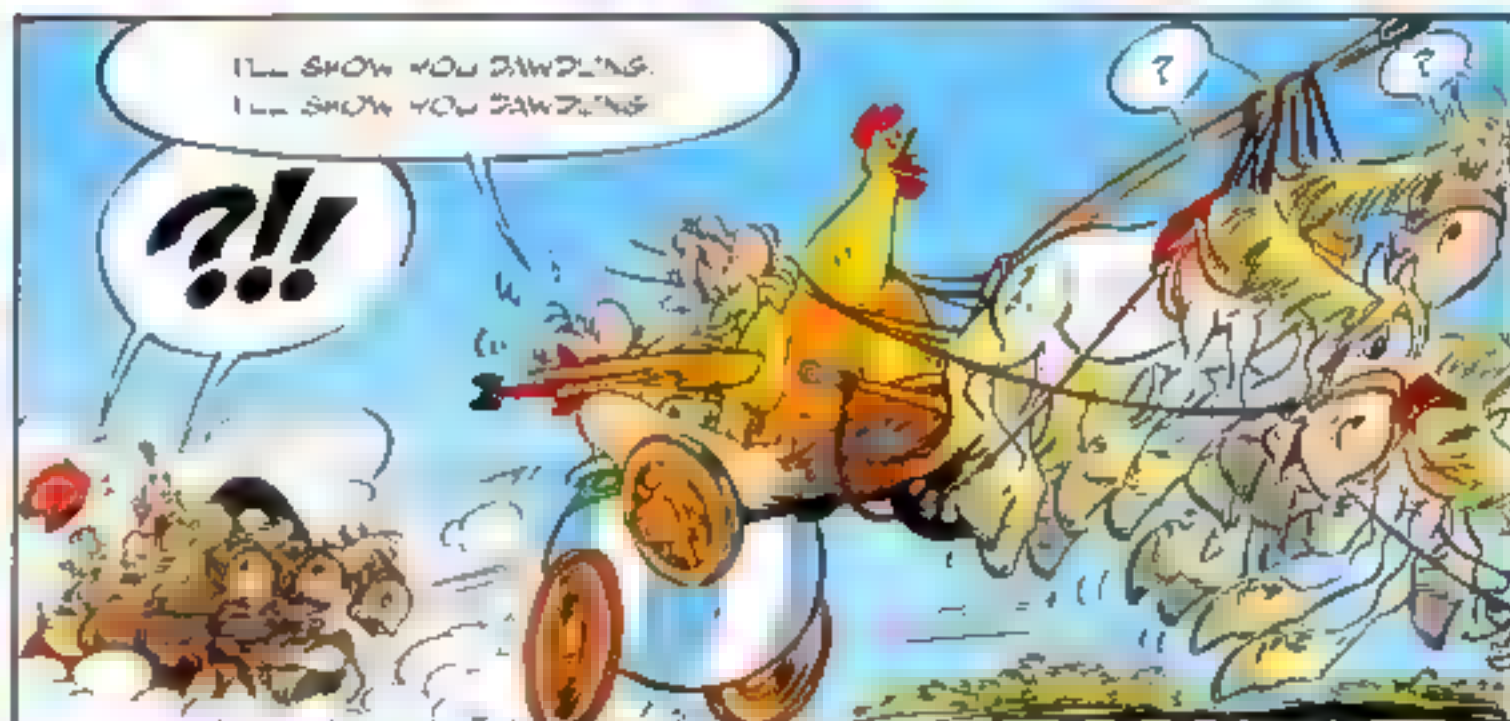
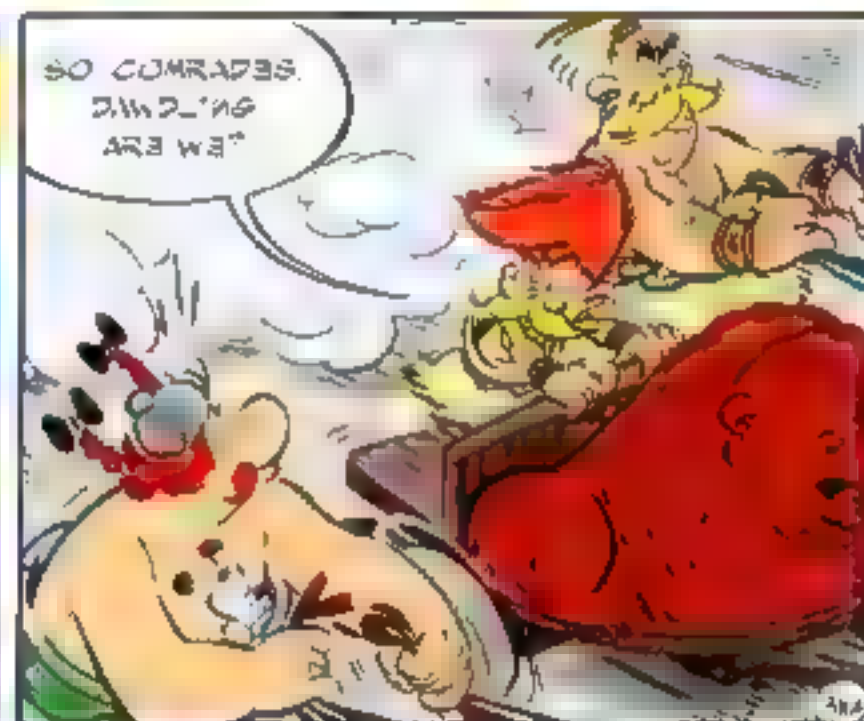
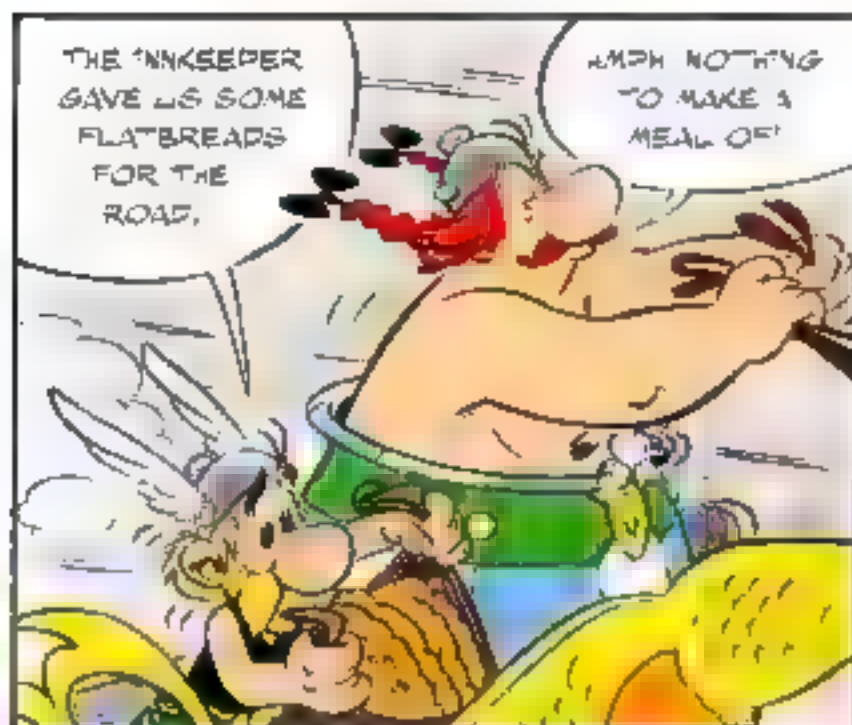


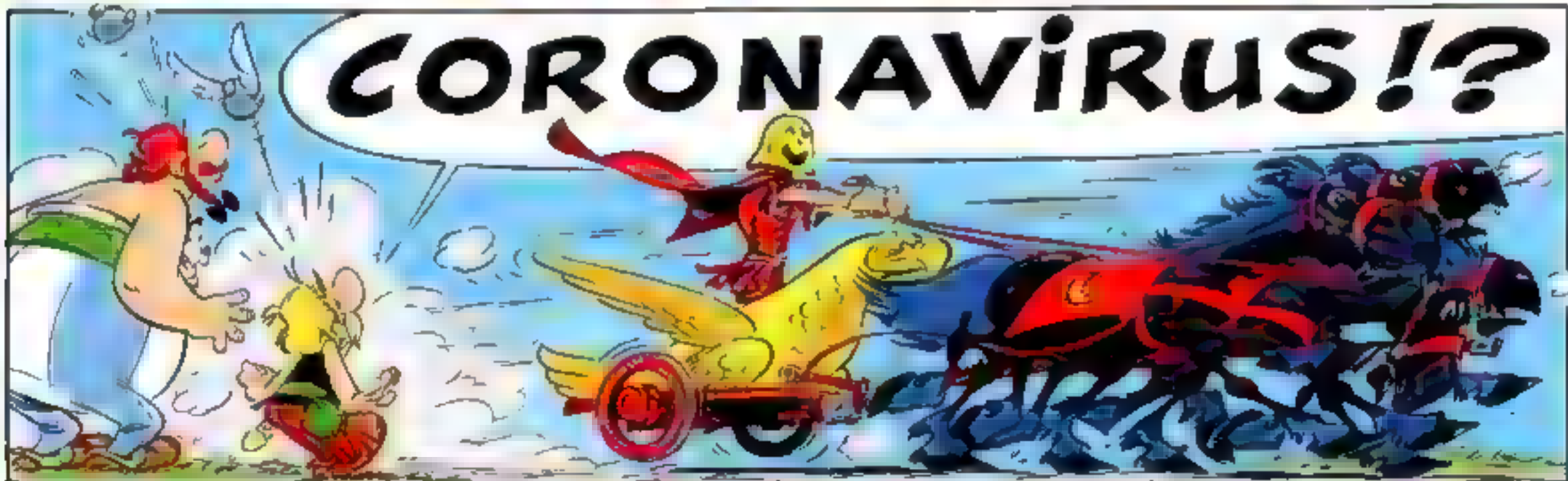
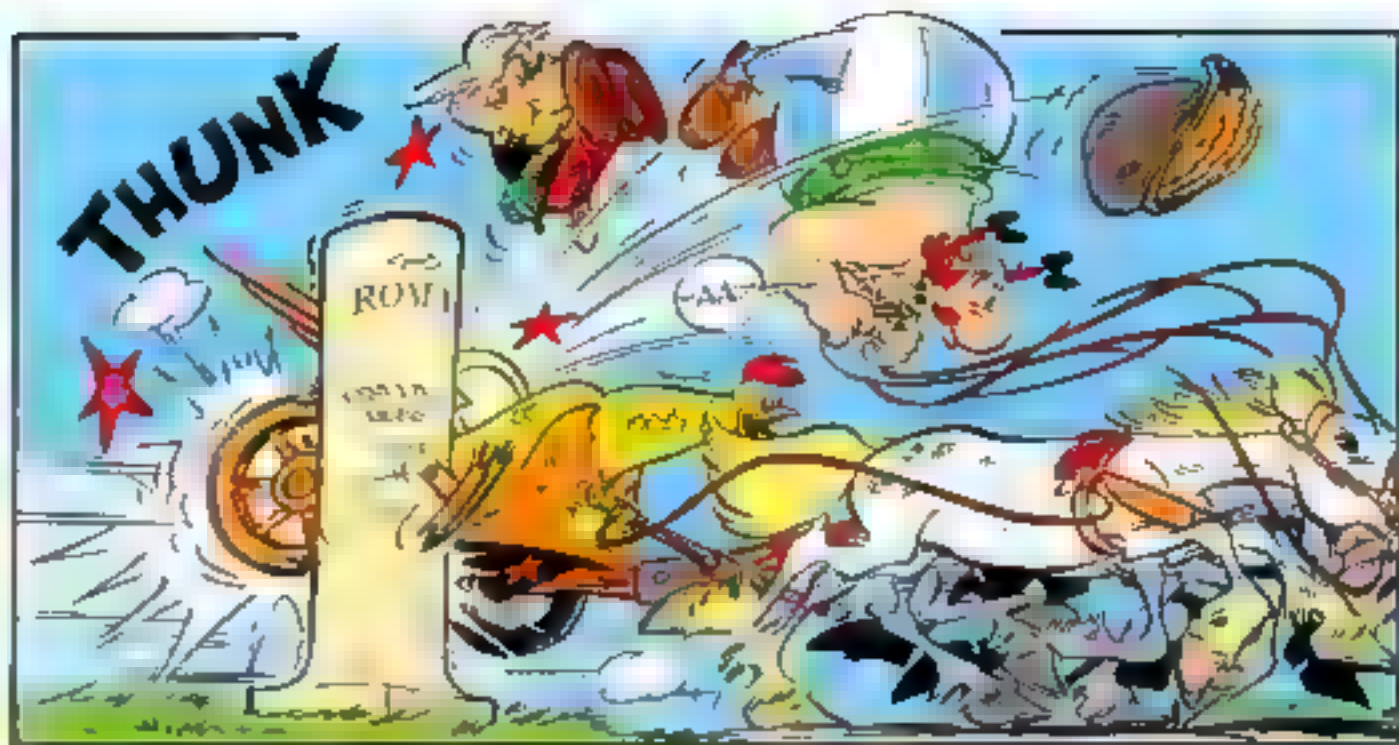
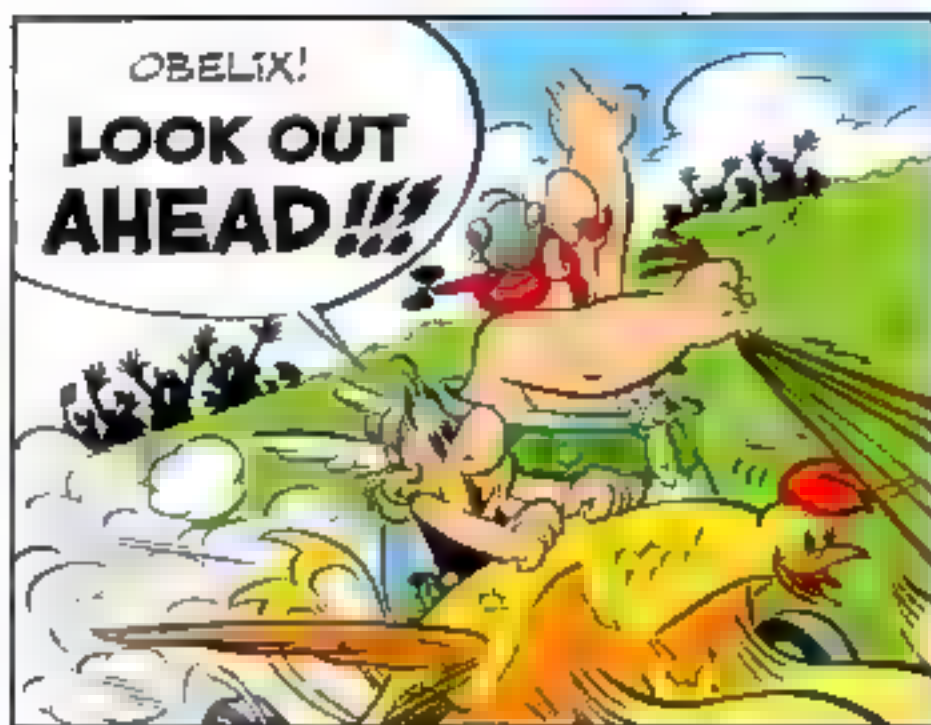
IF YOU ASK ME THESE FLATBREADS WOULD BE BEST TEAMED WITH SOME TOPPING

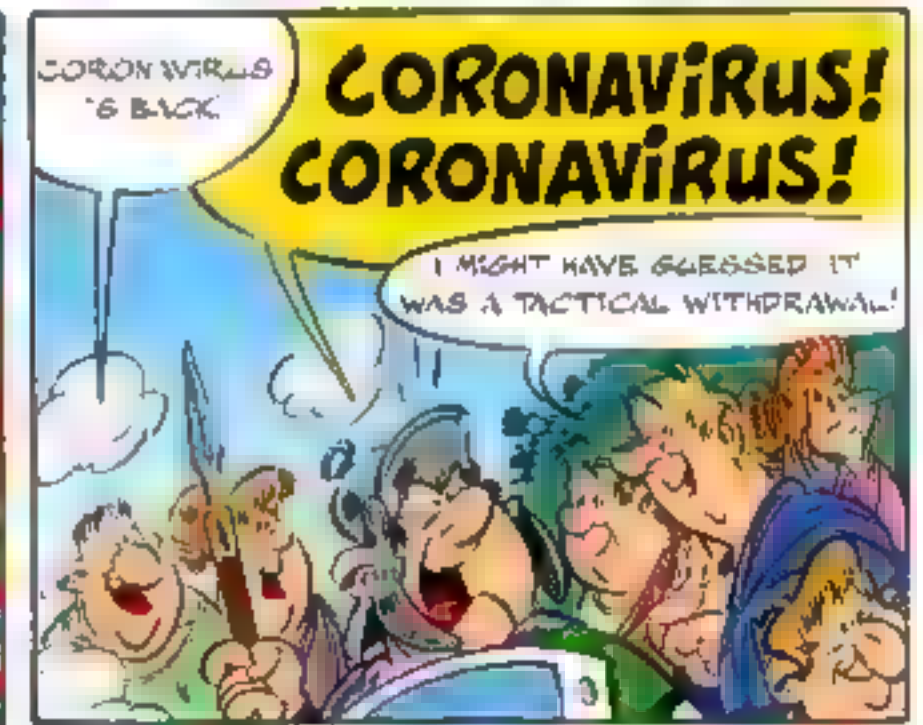
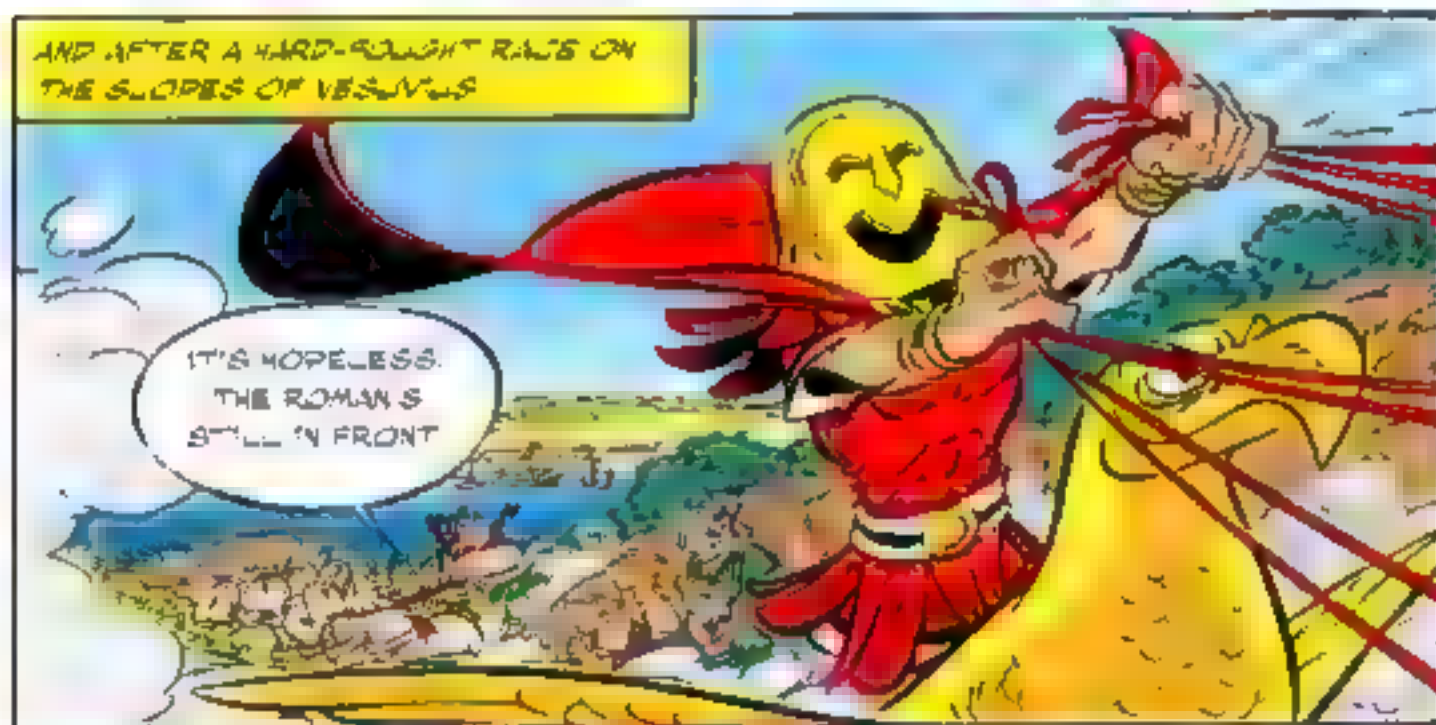
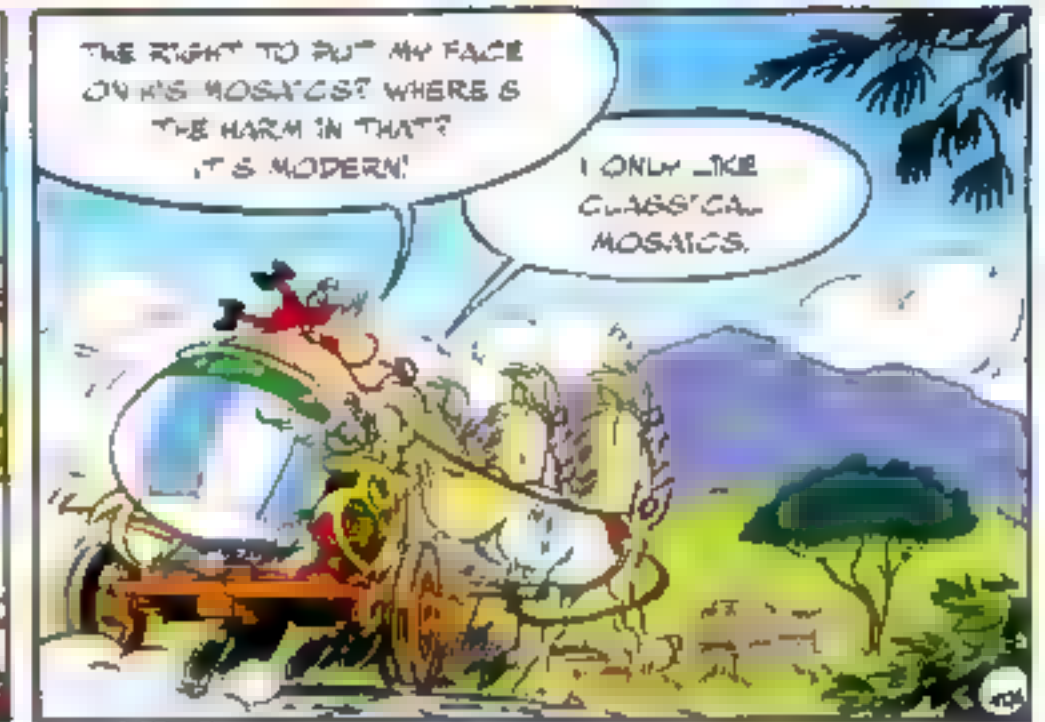


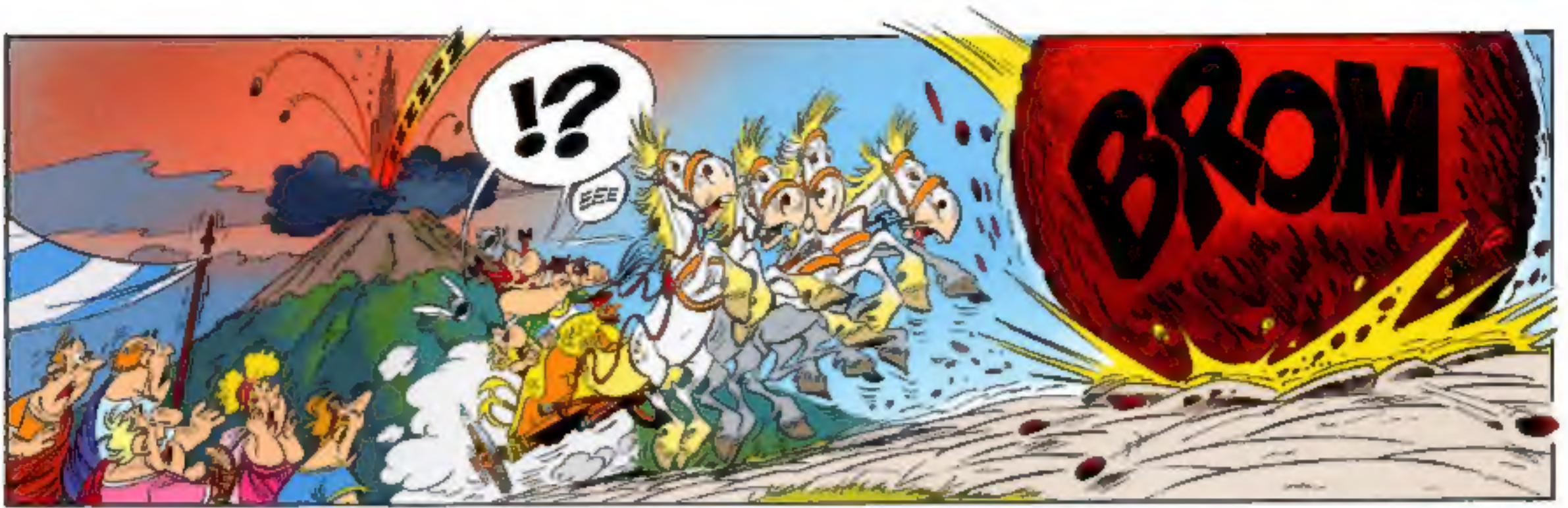
AND AS THE DUCK LEAVES THE CONTESTANTS RACE CHEERFULLY ALONG THE APPROX WAY HE WINS FOR CATHRA SOUTH OF ROME



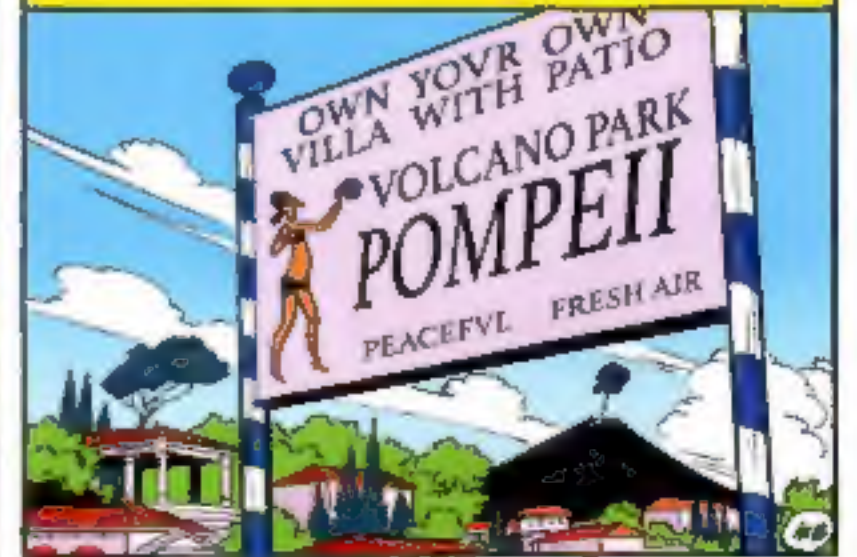


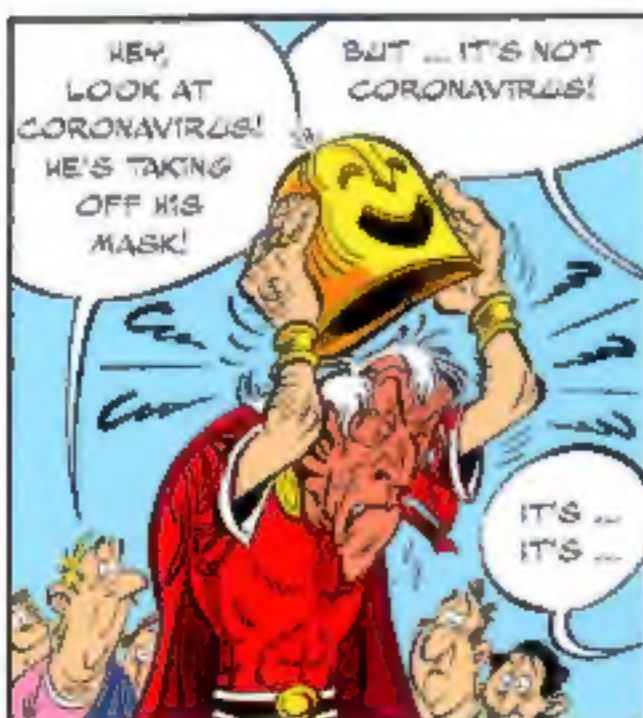
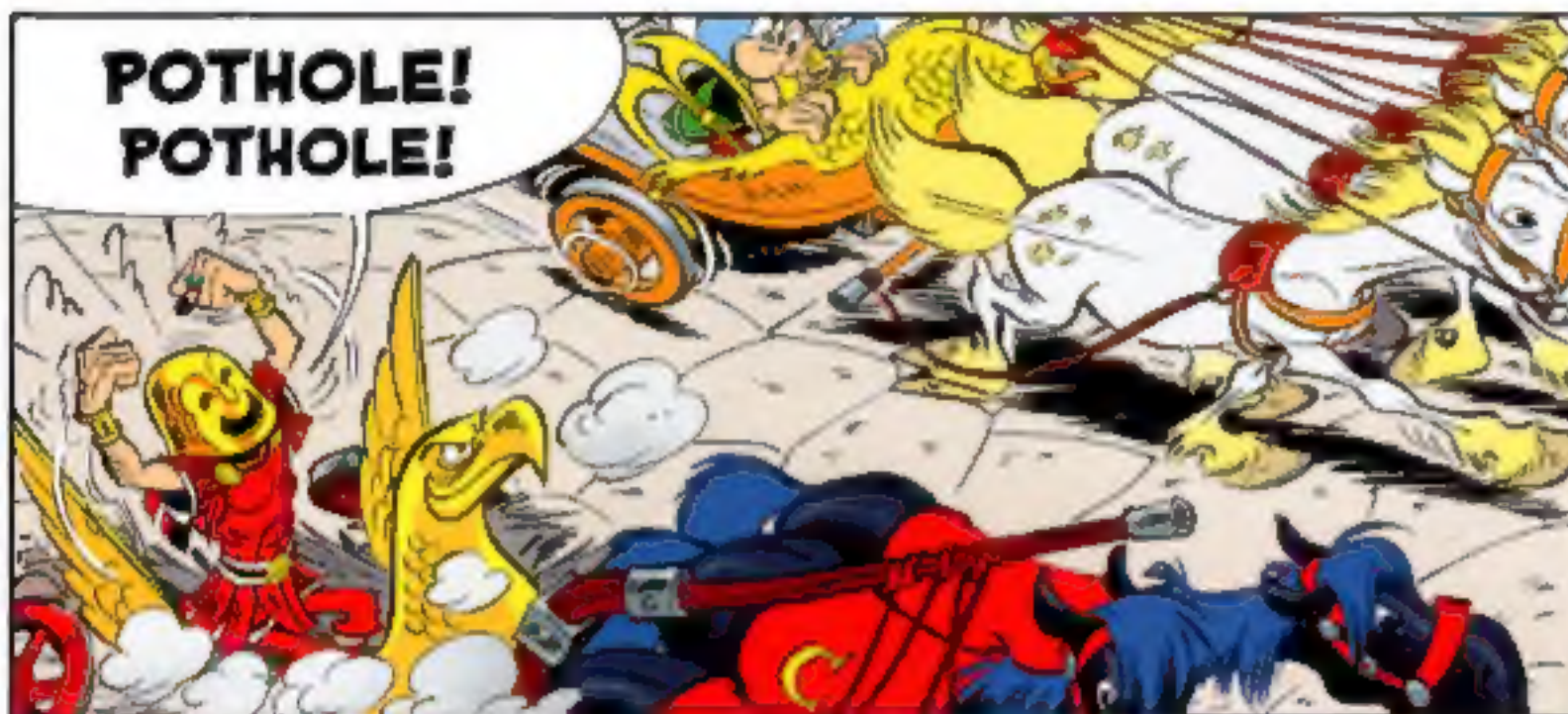
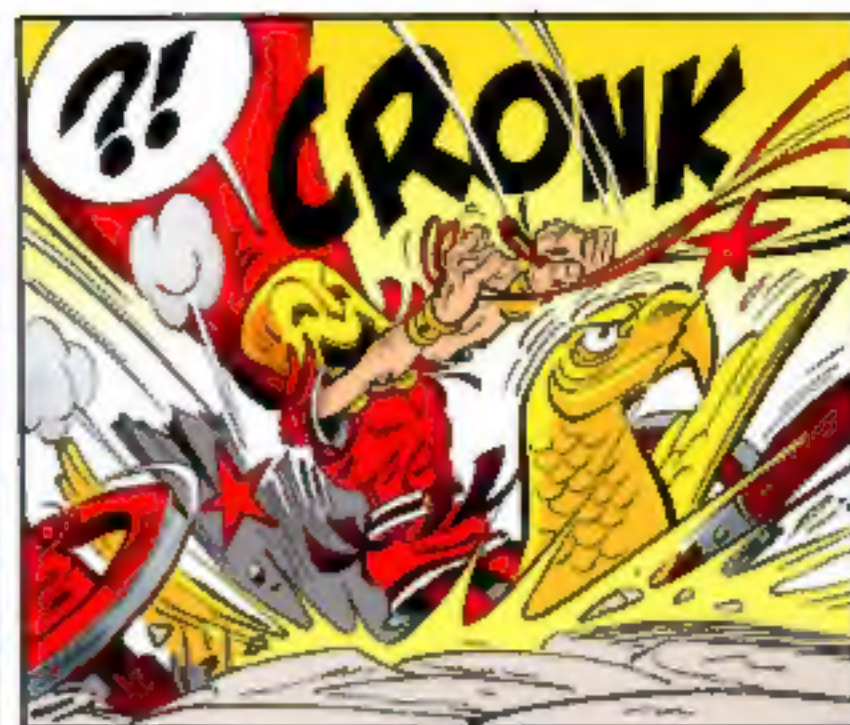


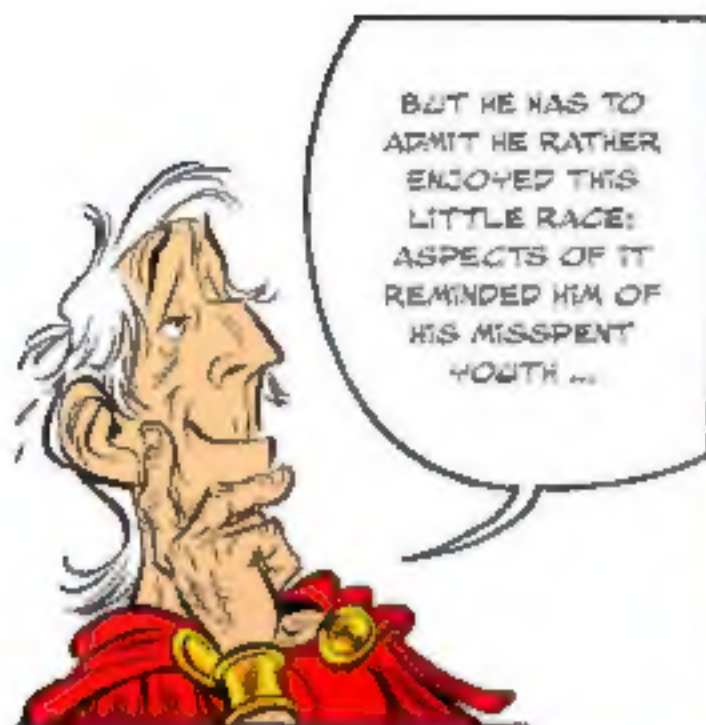


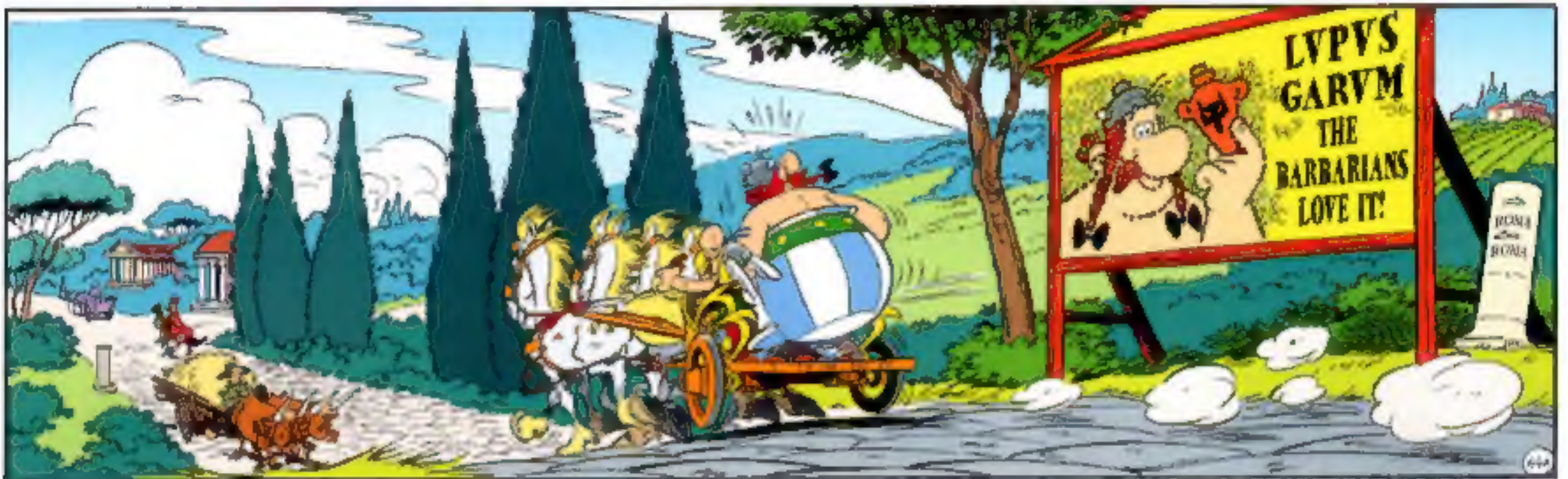


IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT OBELIX'S INTERVENTION AFFORDED THE VESUVIUS REGION A REASONABLY LONG PERIOD OF RESPIRE (UNTIL 79 AD).









FERRI + CONRAD